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THE BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA

THE
BLACK HOLE
OF
CALCUTTA

BY
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B.A., (CANTAB).

PATNA
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To

The Memory of
LIEUTENANT BLAGG
*AN ALLEGED VICTIM OF THE BLACK HOLE
WHO DIED FIGHTING SWORD IN HAND
AND PREFERRED DEATH WITH
HONOUR TO A LIFE WHICH
HE THOUGHT TO BE
DEVOID OF
HONOUR*

PREFACE.

In this little book, the entire evidence which was available on the subject, negative as well as positive, direct as well as indirect, has been elaborately examined and all the arguments that have been or could have been advanced in support of the accepted version have been considered. It is after an exhaustive examination of this nature that I have arrived at the conclusion that the accepted version of the Black Hole incident is unhistorical and should no longer be allowed to tarnish the page of history. I am presenting this view to the world not with any diffidence but with full confidence that justice would at last be done not only to Sirajuddaula but also to the small heroic band of British soldiers who sacrificed their lives but not their honour. It is a great pleasure to me that in refuting the Black Hole story I have been able to unfold a drama which shows at its best the Indian as well as the British character and presents the beautiful picture of British valour hand in hand with Indian chivalry.

I regret that at places I had to use some strong words against Mr. Holwell. I simply could not help it. Mr. Holwell was undoubtedly a man of talent and had he taken to fiction-writing as a profession, he would have shone as one of the luminaries of the eighteenth-century England but as an individual, he was devoid of that sense of honour which is very rightly the pride of every one who belongs to the British nation. Mr. Holwell never hesitated to speak lies if that could secure promotions or other worldly gains. It is needless for me to say that the whole world would detest a man who possesses such a character.

I acknowledge my gratitude to Messrs. Little and Akshay Kumar Mitra, and many other gentlemen who have from time to time offered constructive criticisms on the subject. I am also indebted to Mr. S. C. Hill for his valuable publication of the Bengal Records relating to the years 1756 and 1757, without which it would have been difficult for me to have all the materials at hand for purposes of reference.

I take this opportunity to thank the Under-Secretary of State for India for his very kindly permitting me to publish 'the list of inhabitants.'

and others who bore arms at the last siege of Calcutta, June 1756', which forms part of the Orme MSS. I am also thankful to Mr. W. T. Ottewill, M. B. E., Superintendent of Records, India Office Library, through whose courtesy I had access to many printed and unprinted documents which were available in the India office Library.

Lastly, I must express my deep sense of gratitude to Messrs. C. J. B. Gaskoin M.A. and C. W. Phillips M. A., my Supervisors in the Cambridge University. With them I had several discussions on the subject and they always guided me in the right direction and encouraged me in my researches.

ATTABIRA,
11-8-35.

S. A. AHMAD.

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CHAPTER I.

ACCEPTED VERSION.

The accepted version of the Black Hole incident is that on the night of the 20th June, 1756, one hundred and forty-six persons including one woman were shut up in a room not twenty feet square, with the result that when on the following morning, the door was opened, only twenty-three came out alive¹. According to Orme it was "the most despicable act of cruelty which had for many years, if any, been the lot of British subjects" and Macaulay describes Sirajuddaula on the eve of the Battle of Plassey as seated, gloomily in his tent, haunted—as a Greek poet would have said—by the furies of those who had cursed him with their last breath in the Black Hole."

Forrest in his *Life of Lord Clive* after reciting Holwell's 'tale of horror' says, "It called forth the execrations of the civilized world and even

1. Dodwell's *Dupleix and Clive*, p. 122. According to Cooke, the room was about 18 feet long and 14 feet wide. Dr. C. R. Wilson ascertained that the exact dimensions were 18 feet by 14 feet 10 inches.

after the lapse of one hundred and fifty years it excites emotions which make it difficult to reason calmly." At another place he says, "Nothing in Defoe's *History of the Plague* is more life-like nor more appalling than Holwell's natural and matter of fact narrative of what took place in the Black Hole.....
It has been argued that it would be wiser to let that great crime fall under the shadow of the great power, oblivion. But that crime cannot, any more than the massacres of St. Bartholomew, Drogheda and Glencoe, be effaced from the page of history."

As we shall see presently, 'that great crime' which has been represented as being similar to the massacres of Glencoe, Drogheda and St. Bartholomew was nothing more than the result of Holwell's imagination. The other eye-witnesses were mere dupes in the astute hands of the father of at least one other imaginary tragedy like the Black Hole of Calcutta which unfortunately for him was enquired into and found to be false by no less an authority than the Council of Fort William who wrote thus to the Court of Directors in their letter dated the 30th September 1766 :—

" In justice to the memory of the late Nabob

Meer Jaffier we think it incumbent on us to acquaint you that the horrible massacres where-with he is charged by Mr. Holwell in his address to the proprietors of EAST INDIA STOCK are cruel aspersions on the character of that prince which have not the least foundation in truth."

The contemporaries of Holwell knew him well and had little faith in anything which emanated from him. Clive in his letter to William Mabbot Esqr, dated the 31st January 1757, considered it necessary to give this warning¹ :—

"One word more for the good of the company and then I must conclude.

Mr. Holwell is a specious and sensible man but from what I have heard and observed myself I cannot be persuaded he will ever make use of his abilities for the good of the Company. I am well informed, there is no merit due to him for staying behind in the Fort ; nothing but the want of a boat prevented his escape and flight with the rest."

Some of them were however taken in at first but they soon realized their mistake and this explains why the Council of Fort William, stationed at

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 186.

Fulta, did not say a word about the Black Hole in their letter to the Court of Directors, dated the 17th September, 1756, in which they gave an official account of the loss of Calcutta. A treaty was concluded with Sirajuddaula after the retaking of Calcutta in January 1757 and no mention was made of the Black Hole in that treaty. Thornton in his *History of the British Empire* is almost exasperated at this omission and says, "No satisfaction was obtained for the atrocities of the Black Hole ; and the absence of any provisions for this purpose is the greatest scandal attached to this treaty. For this no sufficient apology can be found. Peace was desirable but even peace is bought too dearly when the sacrifice of national honour is the price."

It may be argued that Clive being apprehensive of the French was anxious to make up matters with the Nawab as speedily as possible and had therefore to ignore the Black Hole incident because its discussion would have delayed matters fatally. But a glance at the terms of the treaty would show that Clive was the master of the situation. As he himself says in his letter to the Court of Directors, dated the 23rd February 1757¹ :—

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 246.

“I can now congratulate Your Honours upon the conclusion of a peace with the Nabob of this province, such a one I hope as will prove both honourable and advantageous to the Company.”

Whatever may be said about the treaty with Sirajuddaula, there is nothing that can account for the absence of any mention of the Black Hole in the treaty which was concluded with Mir Jafar in June 1757. What makes matters still worse is that Scrafton in his letter to Walsh dated Murshidabad, the 20th April 1757¹, actually suggested that a clause should be inserted in the proposed treaty touching the Black Hole. He wrote to Walsh, “I hope the Colonel will pardon my impertinence if I offer to present what I think would be the terms which we should make:—

“Ample restitution to the Company for all their losses and ten *laack* for the charges of the war ; the country south as far as Culpee on condition we keep up a body of a thousand men or more to be employed in his service; ten *Coss* of land in the province of Chittagong whereon to settle a factory ; the French never to resettle ; restitution to all English, the *Seats* and Omi-

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 349.

chand; the guilty of the affair of the Black Hole to be given up to us etc. etc. etc.”

In the same letter he added, “My respectful compliments to the Colonel ¹. I look on writing to you the same as writing to him; only you will have the plague of decyphering.” In his letter dated the 24th April 1757 ², Scrafton wrote to Clive, “I have hitherto addressed myself on public affairs to Mr. Walsh but this letter is of so important a nature that it induces me to take the liberty of addressing it to you immediately.....You will find that all my letters to Mr. Walsh have tended to convince you of this, that we cannot place the least confidence in the Nabob.” This shows that Scrafton’s letter of the 20th April 1757 must have been perused by Clive.

It is clear therefore that the Black Hole incident was deliberately ignored by Clive ³ inspite of the reminder given to him by Scrafton in his letter dated the 20th April 1757. This shows that the

1. Meaning Clive who was at that time a colonel.

2. Hill’s *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 357.

3. In his letter to Alamgir Sani, dated the 30th July 1757, however, Clive wrote that Sirajuddaula had given orders to suffocate, in one night, ‘all the great men and other Englishmen that fell into his hands.’ Little, referring to this incident says, “Clive would

contemporaries of Holwell had little faith in the Black Hole story and that is why no one thought of commemorating it until Holwell himself became Governor and even then he had to spend from his own pocket whatever money was required for the erection of a monument. Busteded in his *Echoes from Old Calcutta* says, "There is no record that I know of, to show in what year this monument was put up. As Holwell got himself painted in the supposed act of supervising its erection, it raises the presumption that the structure took place before he left India in 1760." But even this monument over the remains of the glorious departed, built though it was by private money, was not allowed to stand long; for just sixty years had elapsed when it was pulled down to make room for the Customs House. To quote Busteded again who wrote in 1881, "Holwell erected at his own expense a monument to the memory of those who

have scorned to do for his own private benefit what he thought he was justified in doing for the good of the Company (*Bengal Past and Present* vol. XII, p. 143)." In the same letter Clive stated that Sirajuddaula 'was killed by his servants who followed him to demand their pay' but in a previous letter which he had written to the Secret Committee, London, on the 26th July, 1757, he had admitted that Sirajuddaula 'was cut off by order of the Nabob's [Mir Jafar's] son.' The letter to Alamgir Sani ended with a request for the grant of 'a Sunnud' to Mir Jafar, 'a man just and merciful as his predecessor was wicked and cruel.'

died in the Black Hole; he had it placed over their rude grave and had inscribed on a stone tablet on its front, the names of forty-eight of our countrymen, an act so natural, so kindly and so deserving of all sympathy that one would have thought that every Englishman in Calcutta would have regarded the monument's preservation as a personal trust. Yet it was allowed to go to ruins and its demolition was so effectually completed that no knowledge survives of what became of its inscription marble." Busteed proceeds to say, "Why such an historical monument should have been taken down in 1821, must now I fear be left to conjecture. For some years a belief seems to have been current in Calcutta that it was removed out of deference to the wish of the Marquis of Hastings who, tradition alleges, considered that its continuance had become practically undesirable as likely to wound the sensibilities of our native fellow-subjects or to recall too prominently at the seat of Government a hideous disaster to British arms which it would be wiser to locally bury in oblivion."

It may be argued that the Black Hole signified a defeat of the British arms and hence it was not considered desirable to commemorate it officially by the erection of a monument at the expense of

the Company or out of the money so lavishly distributed by Mir Jafar. But this argument cannot hold good in view of the commemoration of the Patna Massacres only a few years after the Black Hole incident. The following is an extract from the proceedings which will show how the Council in 1764 thought about such matters :—

“Agreed, we write to Patna desiring they will apply to the Nabob through the Resident at the Durbar to make over to us the house where the Massacre was perpetrated and the ground thereto belonging; and having obtained such a grant have the house entirely demolished and the whole ground railed in a square in the centre of which the monument will be erected agreeably to a plan we shall send them.”

We may note here that the contemporary Indian historian, Gholam Hussain Khan, author of the *Seyarul Muta-akherin*, does not say a word about the Black Hole. Raymond who translated his book into English in the year 1789 says in a foot-note, “There is not a word here of those English shut up in the Black Hole to the number of 131, where they were mostly smothered. The truth is that the Hindostanees wanting only to secure them for the night, as they were to be

presented the next morning to the Prince, shut them up in what they heard was the prison of the fort, without having any idea of the capacity of the room; and indeed the English themselves had none of it. This much is certain that this event which cuts so capital a figure in Mr. Watt's (sic Holwell's) performance is not known in Bengal; and even in Calcutta it is ignored by every man out of the four hundred thousand that inhabit that city; at least it is difficult to meet a single native that knows anything about it."

It was unfortunate that the contemporary British historian Orme who was at that time in Madras did not make use of his critical faculties to verify the allegations made. Had he done this, there is no doubt that the boggy of the Black Hole would have been laid low and later generations would have been spared the trouble of wrangling about its truth or otherwise. After Orme, all the British historians took the Black Hole tragedy as established and never felt the necessity of seeing for themselves whether this incident had really been established by cogent, reasonable and trustworthy evidence. The first voice of protest was raised by an Indian, Dr. Bhola Nath Chander, who in his article published in the Calcutta Magazine wrote as follows:--

“ As to the Black Hole tragedy, the unburied site of which is the subject of so much fuss in our day I have a very doubtful faith in its account. Holwell one of the fellow sufferers was the first to publish it to the world. But I have always questioned it to myself, how could 146 beings be squeezed into a room 18 feet square, even if it were possible to closely pack them like the seeds within a pomegranate or like the bags in a ship's hold made into one mass by packets stored in here and there into the interstices. Geometry contradicting, Arithmetic gives a lie to the story. It was little better than a bogey against which was raised an uproar of pity.”

On the 24th March, 1916, a meeting was arranged by the Calcutta Historical Society. Messrs. Little and Akshey Kumar Mitra contended that the Black Hole tragedy was unhistorical. In a previous article Mr. Little had characterised the Black Hole tragedy as a gigantic hoax played upon the world by Holwell¹ but he was advised by Mr. Hill to divert his energies to some more fruitful channel and refrain from disputing facts which had been fully established by evidence. The argument employed

1. *Bengal Past and Present*, vol. XI, p. 76.

by Mr. Hill was to the effect that the critics of the Black Hole had based their conclusions on negative evidence which was incapable of refuting positive evidence adduced by eye-witnesses of the occurrence. Dodwell writing in 1924, followed the accepted version and made the following pungent remarks :—

“Recent attempts have been made to show that Holwell’s narrative is false and that no Black Hole incident took place (See *Bengal Past and Present*, July 1915, pages 75-104 and June 1916, pages 136-171). But the arguments employed cheerfully ignore the first principles of evidence. That Holwell touched up his narrative with a view to picturesque effect is possible enough but that a large number of people were suffocated in the Black Hole is established by the evidence of too many survivors and acquaintances of survivors to be shaken. Of Holwell’s general veracity the present writer has as poor an opinion as anyone ; but even he at times approximated to the truth ; we cannot deny an assertion merely because he made it ; and he had too many enemies for his assertions to pass without close scrutiny.”¹

1. Dodwell’s *Dupleix and Clive*, p. 122.

CHAPTER II.

CONFLICTING ACCOUNTS.

Before we discuss the evidence of the so-called survivors of the Black Hole of Calcutta, it is necessary that we should consider accounts of the capture of *Fort William* by other contemporaries. There were firstly the French at Chandernagore and secondly the Dutch at Hugli who were both anxious to keep in touch with the events of the day as these were bound to have repercussions on their own relations with the *Nawab*. Thirdly the Englishmen at Dacca and fourthly those who were on board the ships at Fulta were also closely following the progress of events in *Fort William*. Fifthly Messrs. Watts and Collet who were prisoners in the camp of Sirajuddaula and were subsequently released and sent to Chandernagore form a class by themselves. The Englishmen at Dacca relied on French accounts but the others came into contact with refugees from *Fort William* and hence the earliest accounts of the capture of *Fort William* given by them are of special value.

On the 20th June 1756, the Council of

Chandernagore wrote a letter to M. De La Bretesche, Patna, in which it was stated that the English had abandoned the town, the inhabitants whereof were fleeing for refuge and dispersing in all directions.¹ On the 21st a postscript was added to this letter, which ran as follows:—"Since the above letter was written we have heard that the Nawab made himself master of the factory of Calcutta yesterday at 5 o'clock. Those of the English who could not escape on board the ships and who made no resistance have been plundered but their lives spared."

We next come to a letter written by M. Le Conte to M. Courtin at Dacca, on the 21st June, 1756.² In this letter also there is no mention of the Black Hole but it may be argued that it was too early for the news to reach Chandernagore on the 21st, if the event occurred only on the 20th night at 8 P. M.

The earliest mention of the Black Hole is in a letter said to have been written by an unknown person from Chandernagore on the 3rd July 1756. From its contents it appears to have been address-

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, Vol. I, p. 22.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, Vol. I, p. 24.

ed to the French at Dacca but the name of the addressee is not mentioned. Hill has published a translation of an extract from the above letter which he found in Fort St. George, Select Committee Consultations of the 9th November 1756. This letter or at least the date of it does not appear to be genuine because had it been sent to Dacca on or about the 3rd July it must have reached there before the 18th¹ and its contents must have come to the knowledge of Richard Becher, Luke Scrafton, Thomas Hyndman and Samuel Waller who constituted the English Council at Dacca and after surrendering the Factory on the 28th June were putting up with the French in their factory. We have on record a letter written by these gentlemen to the Court of Directors on the 18th July 1756² and in this

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1. The English Council surrendered the factory at Dacca to the Nawab's men on the afternoon of the 28th June, vide Dacca Consultations, dated the 28th June (Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 36). This event was mentioned by the French Council, Chandernagore, in their letter to M. De La Brotesche at Patna, dated the 28th June, 1756 (Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 39). Hill says in his Introduction to *Bengal Records*, p. LXIV. "Notwithstanding the absence of good roads, the Indian Kasid or postal messenger manages to travel with great rapidity and letters from Cossimbazar sometimes arrived at Calcutta in as short a time as twenty-seven hours."
 2. Hill admits that this letter is dated the 18th July (See Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 67 foot-note) but he has altered the date

letter there is no mention of the Black Hole. The letter opens thus:—"The present melancholy situation of your affairs in Bengal will appear a very sufficient apology for our not addressing you in the usual form." The Council then describe the causes which led to the rupture with the Nawab, his capture of Kasimbazar and march on Calcutta. Then follows:—"For the particulars of the siege of that place and Fort William we must beg leave to refer Your Honours to some of those gentlemen who continued in the Fort till it was taken. The accounts we have vary much and are difficult to reconcile. All agree in this that many brave men have died miserably whose lives might have been saved by the smallest degree of good conduct and resolution in their leaders."

The language of this letter shows clearly that the writers were not in possession of the facts

to the 12th July. This seems to be unjustified because in their letter dated the 13th July, the English Council at Dacca informed Council, Fort Saint George, that they were thinking of writing to the Court of Directors (Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 95). This shows that the letter to the Court of Directors was written after the 13th July and not before. Becher gave an incorrect date of this letter in his letter dated the 22nd March 1757. For a similar mistake committed by Holwell, see Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 347

mentioned in the letter said to have been written from Chandernagore on the 3rd July. Otherwise, they would not have omitted to mention the small chamber in which 160 or a large number of Europeans were shut up, out of whom as many as 132 were found dead on the following morning. The words "many brave men have died miserably, whose lives might have been saved by the smallest degree of good conduct and resolution in their leaders," seem to have been used in reference to those persons who were left in Fort William and killed on the 19th and the 20th, when, as Captain Mills says, "the enemy got possession of the top of the Church and houses round about the garrison which being loftier than the walls and commanding all the bastions, and galled us so that no man could stand them (for their small arms), they killing or wounding all that appeared in sight."

We next come to a letter written to M. Demontorcin on the 1st August 1756¹ by a Frenchman whose name has not been mentioned by Hill in his *Bengal Records*. The writer of this letter makes no mention of the Black Hole either directly or indirectly although

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 173.

he gives a detailed account of the capture of Fort William.

The next letter is from M. Renault to M. Le Marquis Dupleix dated Chandernagore, the 26th August 1756. In this letter also an account has been given of the capture of Fort William but there is no mention of the Black Hole¹. The absence of any mention of the Black Hole in these two letters is very significant.

M. Baussett in his letter to M. Le Marquis Dupleix, dated Chandernagore, the 8th October 1756, says that more than 120 persons, men and women were put in prison and 'forgotten for seven days at the end of which time when it was opened 14 came out alive and the rest were dead.'² There are only two other French accounts which have been published by Hill in *Bengal Records*, 1756-57. One is contained in a letter from the French Council at Chandernagore to the Superior Council in the Isle of France, dated the 16th December 1756, in which it is mentioned that prisoners to the number of 200 were hurriedly shut up in a ware-house where almost all were suffocated in one night. The other account is

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 208.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 230.

given in a letter to the Directors, dated Isle of France, the 7th March 1757, in which it is said that after the flight of the Governor there remained in the Fort at Golgotha [Calcutta] about 150 Englishmen 'who in several attacks gave signs of their great courage but want of discipline caused their destruction.' They were made prisoners and thrown into a dungeon so small that the next morning 124 were suffocated.

We now come to the accounts left by the Dutch. In a letter written by the Dutch Council, Hugli, to the Supreme Council, Batavia, dated Fort Gustavus, the 5th July 1756,¹ an account is given of the capture of Fort William but not a word is said about the Black Hole. About the Englishmen who could not escape to the ships, the Dutch Council say only this much:—"The rest who did not perish by the sword, have fallen into the Nawab's hands and are bound in irons." Another letter was written by M. Vernet to M. La Tour on the 7th July ². In this letter also, there is no mention of the Black Hole although events following the capture of Fort William have been mentioned.

1. Hills' *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 54.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 59. This letter was written from Kasimbazur before Holwell could circulate his story there.

The first mention of the Black Hole is made in a letter from the Dutch Council at Hugli to the Supreme Council, Batavia, dated the 24th November 1756¹. In this letter it is mentioned that 160 prisoners were shut up in the Black Hole in which there was not room enough for 40 and that only 15 or 16 came out alive on the following morning.

The second mention which is doubtful may be said to have been made indirectly in a letter from the Dutch Council, Hugli, to the Council of Seventeen, dated the 2nd January 1757, in which the Dutch Council stated that the young Nawab treated the British who fell in his hands with great cruelty.²

Absence of any mention of the Black Hole in Dutch accounts of the 5th and the 7th July is very important because it shows that up till the 7th July the Black Hole incident was not known to the Dutch although they were in close touch with all the events of the day. The first mention was made on the 24th November 1756, when Holwell and his friends had had sufficient time to publish their version of the Black Hole incident.

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, P. 302.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 78.

We now come to the deliberations of the English merchants at Dacca. They were Richard Becher, Luke Scrafton, Thomas Hyndman and Samuel Waller and two of their consultations dated the 27th and 28th June respectively and one letter dated the 18th July, have been published by Hill in his *Bengal Records*. In the earliest consultation which is dated the 27th June, it is mentioned :—" This day at noon our *Vakeel* came from the *Durbar* and acquainted us that the Nabob told him, Surrajah Dowlat had taken and plundered the town of Calcutta and had also made himself master of Fort William, taken Mr. Holwell and some other gentlemen prisoners. That the Governor, Second and some few more having taken to the ships were endeavouring to make their escape down the river. That this intelligence came from the French." On the 28th there was a consultation again but nothing was said about the capture of Fort William. On the 18th July a letter was written to the Court of Directors, and as mentioned above, not a word was said about the Black Hole.

Next we come to the different accounts by persons on board the ships at Fulta where they had reached on the 26th June. Till the 13th July they maintained silence on the subject

although Cooke and Lushington two of the survivors of the Black Hole joined them on the 21st June, and Captain Mills on the 10th July. On the 13th July the Council at Fulta wrote to Council, Fort St. George, as follows¹:—“Our utmost efforts have been employed to dispatch to you sooner the intelligence of the capture of Calcutta by the Moors acting under the orders of Souragge Dowlat, the new Nabob, which account we doubt not will have reached you before this can possibly arrive by means of *pattamars* from the *shroffs* or foreign nations. A narrative of this unhappy event will be in our opinion faithfully related to you by Mr. Charles Manningham, which we have not time to commit at present to writing.” The real reason for not committing the narrative to writing was lack of unanimity amongst the members of the Council as to what should be committed to writing and what not and in order to get over this difficulty, the happy expedient of sending two representatives² who could relate the narrative verbally was taken recourse to.

Captain Grant wrote an account of the capture of Calcutta on the 13th July and Drake wrote a

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 71.

2. Manningham and Le Beaume.

narrative on the 19th July. Lindsay also wrote an account in his letter to Orme, written in July, the exact date of which is not given. The only other account is by William Tooke whose narrative is undated but covers the period 10th April to 10th November 1756, which shows that it was written after the 10th November 1756.

Besides these four accounts written from off Fulta, there is one other account written by George Grey, Junior, which is undated. But it was handed over to Mr. Watts at Chandernagore on the 16th July 1756, which seems to be the date on which it was written. George Grey, Junr, it may be noted was in Fort William on the 20th June, and escaped when the Fort was taken. He subsequently returned to Calcutta and lived with Captain Mills in the house of Dr. Knox till the 1st July.

Captain Grant in his account says, " And such as were so unhappy as to be taken prisoners were a night put into the Black Hole, a place about 10 foot square, to the number of near 200 Europeans, Portuguese and Armenians, of whom many wee wounded. They were so crowded one upon another in this narrow confinement that by the heat and suffocation not above ten of the

number survived until morning. Some of those who give us the account, say that they fired upon them all night with small arms through the doors and windows but this is contradicted by others¹."

George Grey, Junior, in his account which is dated probably the 16th July says²:—"In the meantime the Moors surrounded and shewed them signs of quarter, upon which they delivered themselves up. Some of them went to the Naob himself and were by him pardoned,³ and others whilst the enemy were busy about the plunder got into a boat and went down the river to the ships at that time lying off Surman's Gardens. But most of those that remained in the fort were put into the Black Hole to the number of 146, of whom 123 were miserably suffocated by the heat, occasioned by so many being shut up in so small a place."

Drake in his narrative dated the 19th July 1756 writes³:—"Thus was the loss of our settlement completed and Calcutta destroyed and pillaged by an enemy hitherto contemptible and who showed themselves at this time of the

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 73.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 106.

3. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 118.

cruellest disposition, for some of our soldiers having made too free with liquor were riotous, which occasioned the Nabob to order every person his prisoner to be confined without distinction from Mr. Holwell down to the common militia. His people having no compassion on our sufferings thrust them into the Black Hole, a very small place with little or no air, in which were put near 200 persons without water or any kind of provisions and so pent up were they as to be forced to trample one upon another." He goes on to say that on the 21st morning not more than 25 were left alive. Lindsay in his letter to Orme¹ which is undated reveals the same story and puts the number of those who were confined at 200, out of whom 20 or 25 came out alive.

Finally we come to Tooke who in his narrative written in November 1756 says as follows:—"Contrary to all expectation in the evening, all that remained in the factory were thrust into a prison called the Black Hole, to the number of about 147, where they remained till next morning, when those that were alive were let out, about 23 in all, the rest being suffocated in prison²."

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 163.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 248.

The official news of the capture of Calcutta was sent to the Court of Directors in a letter dated the 17th September 1756. In this letter no mention was made of the Black Hole. Rather it was affirmed that a large number of officers and private men fell fighting. The relevant portion of this letter runs thus:—

“The next morning they commenced a brisk fire upon the fort which they continued the whole day and great part of Sunday the 20th; and having gained possession of the several houses near the factory and the church, they destroyed a great many of our officers and private men who being harassed out with continual duty and the enemy overpowering us with their numbers, the walls were scaled on the evening of the 20th and the fort surrendered upon promise of their civil treatment of the prisoners¹.” The Council did not say that the promise was broken.²

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 45.

2. In their letter dated the 31st January, 1757, the Council, Fort William, made a casual reference to the Black Hole in the following words, “Our chaplains having both demised, Mr. Gervas Bellamy in the Black Hole and Mr. Robert Mapletoft of a fever at Fulta, we have appointed the Reverend Mr. Cobbe our chaplain.” This shows that till then some of the members of the Council were under the impression that one or two men might have died in the Black Hole, not as a

We now come to the accounts of Messrs. Watts and Collet who were prisoners in the camp of Sirajuddaula when Fort William was captured. The first account which they gave was in a letter to Council, Fort St. George, written on the 2nd July 1756¹. In this letter there is no specific mention of the Black Hole incident but there is a vague reference that 'most of the Company's servants that remained when the Governor and others went away were either killed or have since died by ill usage.' The exact way in which they were ill-used was not described.

The next letter which Messrs. Watts and Collet wrote was on the 6th July 1756², addressed to Council, Fort St. George. In this letter nothing was said about the capture of Fort William.

On the 16th July, however, they wrote a letter

result of any ill-treatment amounting to a breach of the promise which had been given by the Nawab, but on account of some other fact which they did not disclose. Holwell's story appears to have been definitely discarded by the Council on the 17th September 1756, when they sent an official account of the loss of Calcutta to the Court of Directors. Otherwise there is no reason why the incident would not have been referred to, in the account mentioned above.

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 45.
2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 56.

to the Court of Directors in which a full-fledged version of the Black Hole was given. As they say, "Most of the gentlemen, officers and soldiers were carried prisoners to the Nabob who ordered them into the Black Hole where out of 146, one hundred and twenty-three were found dead, the next morning, supposed to be suffocated by the closeness of the place¹." We may note here that George Grey, Junior's account of the capture of Calcutta was enclosed by Messrs. Watts and Collet with their letter addressed to the Court of Directors. It is therefore clear that the statement made by them with regard to the Black Hole was based on the information given by George Grey, Junior.

We shall now come to the accounts given by the survivors namely Holwell, Captain Mills and Cooke. It is on their evidence that the story of the Black Hole must rest or fall because no other independent account of the alleged event is forthcoming. The earliest French account is given in a letter said to have been written from Chandernagore on the 3rd July, 1756, but Captain Mills had reached Chandernagore by the 2nd July and there is evidence to show that the French account dated the 3rd July was based on information

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 99.

given by some one who was a confederate of Holwell. It is mentioned in the French account that "about 160 Europeans who were taken in the fort were shut up in a chamber so small that they could only stand upright with their arms raised." This tallies with the account given by Holwell on the 8th July which as reported by Sykes, reads thus :—"As soon as the Nabob arrived in the fort he found with covenanted servants, soldiers and officers to the number of 160 who were put in a place called the Black Hole." The Dutch Council and M. Vernet had nothing to say about the Black Hole in their letters, dated the 5th and the 7th July respectively because neither Holwell nor any of his confederates could visit Hugli before the end of July. News of the Black Hole was carried to the English refugees by Cooke and Lushington who joined them on the 21st June. They were followed by Captain Mills who reached Fulta on the 10th July. At Fulta too, the first version of the Black Hole, as given by Holwell appears to have been circulated by the 13th July. Captain Grant says in his account of that date, "Some of those who give us the account, say that they [the Nawab's men] fired upon them [the Black Hole victims] all night with small arms through the doors and windows." This is precisely

what Holwell stated in his first account and shows that an agreed version of the Black Hole incident was circulated at first by Holwell and his confederates. Some of the latter, however, broke down, perhaps in cross-examination or forgot part of the fabricated account which they were to circulate, with the result that they gave contradictory accounts, as disclosed by Captain Grant in his account dated the 13th July in which he states clearly that the account given by some that the Nawab's men fired through the doors at night was contradicted by others. Holwell realized his difficulties and as we shall see presently, himself gave a go-by to his first story within a short time.

Five different accounts of the Black Hole incident were given by Holwell at five different times. His first account is reported by Sykes in his letter dated the 8th July 1756, the relevant portion of which reads as follows ¹:—

“ As soon as the Nabob arrived in the Fort he found with covenanted servants, soldiers and officers to the number of 160 who were put into a place called the Black Hole and jammed so close that out of 160 put in alive the next morning 110 were brought out dead for want of air. Jenks,

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 61.

Reveley, Law, Eyres, Bailie, Cooke, Captain Buchanan, Scott and all our other military officers and covenanted servants dead. The writers and officers behaved bravely. A prodigious number of Moors are killed. All the night our poor gentlemen were in the Black Hole, the Nabob's people kept firing at them through the window. This is the purport of Holwell's letter."

The second account by Holwell is contained in his letter to Councils, Bombay and Fort Saint George, dated Murshidabad, the 17th July 1756¹. It runs as follows :—

"The resistance we made and the loss they suffered so irritated the Nabob that he ordered myself and all the prisoners promiscuously to the number of about 165 or 170 to be crammed altogether into a small prison in the fort called the Black Hole, from whence only about sixteen of us came out alive in the morning, the rest being suffocated to death—among those myself, Mr. Richard Court, Mr. John Cooke, Mr. Lushington, Ensign Walcot, Mr. Burdett (a young gentleman volunteer), Captain Mills, Captain Dickson, and about 7 or 8 soldiers Blacks and Whites; amongst the dead Messrs. Eyre and William Baillie, the

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 109.

Reverend Mr. Bellamy, Messrs. Jenks, Rively, Law, T. Coales etc., our 3 Military Captains, and 9 Subalterns, many of our volunteers and inhabitants, of whom particular lists shall be forwarded the Honourable Company as recollection enables me”.

It is quite clear from this letter that Sirajud-
 daula was held responsible for having ordered the
 imprisonment of the Black Hole victims in the
 Black Hole. But this was nothing but a delibe-
 rate false statement, the difficulty of maintaining
 which was realised by Holwell himself. So in the
 third account of the Black Hole, given by him in his
 letter to Council Fort Saint George, dated Hugli
 the 3rd August 1756 ¹ he wrote:—“ With this you
 have copy of my letter dispatched per *Pattamar*
 from Muxadabad the 17th ultimo, on the reprizal
 of which I find a few errors and omissions
 occasioned by the wretched state I was then in
 and which I now beg leave to rectify.
 I over reckoned the number
 of prisoners put into the Black Hole and the
 number of the dead ; the former being only 146
 and the latter 123, many recovering after air was
 let in by opening the door in the morning; and

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 185.

many more I doubt not might have recovered had any means or care been taken of them. I charged the Nabob with designedly having ordered the unheard-of piece of cruelty of cramming us all into that small prison; but I have now reason to think I did him injustice. His orders I learn was only general, ‘ That we should be imprisoned that night, our number being too great to be at large.’ And being left to the mercy and direction of his *Jemidars* and *Burkandosses*, their resentment for the number of their bretheren slain took this method of revenge ; and indeed they ceased not insulting us the whole night, though witnesses of horrors which bar all description.” In the first account it may be noted, the allegation was that the men of the Nawab kept on firing at the prisoners the whole night but now it was toned down to mere insulting.

The plea taken by Holwell for his errors of omission and commission cannot be accepted. The letter which he wrote on the 17th July covers about six printed pages in Mr. Hill’s *Bengal Records* and sets forth at a great length the causes which led to the attack on Calcutta, the effect of the capture of Kasimbazar, the condition of Fort William and its garrison, the operations undertaken on the 16th, 17th and 18th, the flight

of Drake and others on the 19th, the proceedings of the Council held after Drake's desertion, the orders passed by Holwell after his election as Governor, the various incidents of the fighting on the 19th and the 20th, the parley and the surrender and finally the Black Hole tragedy. A perusal of this letter would convince any impartial observer that the writer could not have been in a wretched state when he wrote it and the plea taken by Holwell therefore falls completely to the ground.

We have also a piece of valuable evidence contained in a letter of Mr. Young which he wrote to Drake ¹. This letter is dated the 10th July but this is a mistake because in the body of the letter mention is made of Holwell's arrival at Chandernagore, a few days before the letter was written. Holwell was released at Murshidabad only on the 16th July ² and so the letter of Mr. Young could not have been written on the 10th July. Probably it was written about the end of July or the beginning of August.

Mr. Young says that Holwell who came to

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I. p. 62.

2. Holwell's letter to Councils Bombay and Fort Saint George, dated the 17th July 1756, (Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 115.)

Chandernagore a few days before the former wrote the letter mentioned above, had also drawn up a narrative of the whole affair in vindication of his conduct. He then proceeds to say, "All who were taken alive were immediately crammed into the Black Hole, to the number of 146 or 150, wounded and unwounded of all ranks. Out of that number there escaped alive 23 persons of whom Mr. Holwell was one. "Young wrote this letter after seeing Holwell and has put in what he heard from him and so the contents of this letter give the views which Holwell held about the end of July or the beginning of August. At that time too Holwell implicated Sirajuddaula though indirectly as is evident from the statement that the prisoners were put into the Black Hole immediately after the capture of Fort William. But he admitted later on that the prisoners were at first well-treated and that they were put into the Black Hole after an interval of over two hours. ¹

We now come to the fourth account given by Holwell as contained in his letter to the Court of Directors, dated Fulta the 30th November 1756. It runs as follows ² :—

1. Holwell's Genuine Narrative (Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 131.)

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 51.

“I had three interviews with him [Sirajud-
 daula] that evening, one in *Durbar*. At first he
 expressed much resentment at our presumption
 in defending the fort against his army with so
 few men, asked why I did not run away with my
 Governor, and others, seemed much disappointed
 and dissatisfied at the sum found in the Treasury,
 asked me many questions on this subject, to all
 which I made the best replies that occurred,
 and on the conclusion he assured me on the word
 of a soldier that no harm should come to me,
 which he repeated more than once. The conse-
 quence proved how little regard was paid to this
 assurance, for I was with the rest of my fellow-
 sufferers about eight at night crammed into the
 Black Hole prison and passed a night of horrors,
 I will not attempt to describe as they bar all
 descriptions. On the ensuing morning (the 21st
 June) I was taken out from amongst the dead and
 again carried before the *Suba* more dead than
 alive. He seemed little affected. I told him
 the miserable catastrophe of my companions ; he
 answered me by saying he was well informed
 there was an immense treasure buried or secreted
 in the fort, and that I was privy to it, and com-
 manded me to point out where it was hid if I
 expected favour.”

Lastly, we come to “ A Genuine Narrative of the deplorable deaths of the English gentlemen and others who were suffocated in the Black Hole in Fort William at Calcutta in the kingdom of Bengal, in the night succeeding 20 June, 1756, in a letter to a friend by J. Z. Holwell Esqr.”—published in 1764 ¹. The letter in question was written to William Davis Esqr., from on board the *Syren* sloop, on the 28th February 1757.

The most important feature of this letter is the introduction of one woman namely Mrs. Carey as a sufferer and a survivor of the Black Hole who in the words of Holwell was too young and handsome to be released the next morning. Another momentous disclosure made in this letter was that Omichand was responsible for the Black Hole. Says Holwell² :—

“But that the hard treatment I met with may truly be attributed in a great measure to his suggestion and insinuations, I am well assured from the whole of his subsequent conduct ; and this further confirmed to me in the three gentlemen selected to be my companions, against each of whom he had conceived particular resentment ; and you know Omichand can never forgive.”

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 131.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 146.

Forrest has been very much impressed by what Holwell says, and in his *Life of Lord Clive* expresses his sentiments thus :—

“It was not Surajah Dowla who was at the time pronounced to be the author of the tragedy of the Black Hole. Holwell gives us a clue to the man who was considered to be the arch-conspirator. He mainly attributes the severity with which he was treated to the instigations of Omichand.”

But perhaps Holwell had forgotten all this, when he attended the Select Committee meeting held on the 10th April 1757. The proceedings of this meeting are as follows :—

Present :—

Colonel Robert Clive,
Major Kilpatrick,
J. Z. Holwell Esqr.

“We the servants of the East India Company should always be grateful to that noble-minded and wealthy merchant of Calcutta, Omichand. It was through his agency that we succeeded to secure the assistance and co-operation of Diwan Nuncoomar, Phoujdar of Hoogly. A body of Subahdar’s troops was stationed within the bounds of Chandernagore previously to our attack of that

place. These troops belonged to the garrison of Hoogly and were under the command of Diwan Nuncoomar. If these troops were not withdrawn, it would have been highly improbable to gain victory."

We now come to the statement of Holwell with respect to Mrs. Carey. Busteed in his '*Echoes from old Calcutta*' (Second Edition, 1888). writes :—

"I am much indebted to Mrs. Henry Beveridge, at present in Calcutta, for letting me see the book to which she refers in the following letter written by her some few years ago to the *Calcutta Englishman* which was copied into some London papers and transcribed thence by me into the first edition of this book as a record of historical interest; though I had not then the pleasure of knowing whom the writer's initials stood for. The gentleman who chronicles his visit to Mrs. Carey was I think an attorney in the Supreme Court, as one of that name was practising in Calcutta in 1780 and died there early in this century." The letter referred to above reads thus :—

"I am able to quote the following interesting notes from a fly-leaf at the end of our copy of

Holwell's Tracts. They are presumably in the hand-writing of the former owner of the book.

“ *Note 1*—Aug. 13th, 1799. This forenoon between the hours of ten and eleven o'clock visited by appointment, in company with Mr. Charles Child, at her house in Calcutta, situate in an angle at the head of the Portugese Church Street and east of the Church, Mrs. Carey the last survivor of those unfortunate persons who were imprisoned in the Black Hole of Calcutta on the capture of that place in 1756 by Sirajud-daula. This lady now 58 years of age as she herself told me, is of a size rather above the common stature and very well proportioned ; of a fair mesticia colour, with correct regular features which give evident marks of beauty which must once have attracted admiration. She confirmed all that Mr. Holwell had said on the subject of the Black Hole in the foregoing letters and added that besides her husband, her mother Mrs. Eleanour Weston (her name by second marriage) and her sister aged about ten years had also perished there-in and that other women, the wives of soldiers and children had shared a like fate there. Signed, Thomas Boileau”.

As regards Mrs. Carey's relegation to the harem, Busteed goes on to say as follows :—

“ Within the last three or four years I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance in India of a near connection by marriage of a direct lineal descendant of Mrs. Carey, who was in a position to give much interesting information about her as he had often intimately conversed with one who had been brought up by her. My informant, a European gentleman of the highest respectability and intelligence gave me to understand that the few direct descendants of Mrs. Carey now in India would be unwilling as many retiring people are to have any reference made to them by name in print, so that in deference to that feeling I am not able to mention a good deal of what the gentleman I allude to told me in conversation which I had with him. I may however authoritatively say this much, Mrs. Carey was not carried off by the Moors at all. On the contrary she remained in or near Calcutta and before long married again, her second husband being a military officer of field rank. By this marriage she had two sons and I believe one daughter. During her later life she reverted to the name of her first husband. She was buried in the Moorgihatta (Catholic Cathedral) the site of the grave was afterwards absorbed by some enlargement of portion of the Church. There is in existence still a well-executed

miniature of hers, painted on the inside of the lid of a trinket box ; it certainly testifies to the truth of what Holwell records about her personal appearance for the artist has shown her in her comely youth.’

Holwell gave his first account of the Black Hole to Sykes on the 8th July 1756, while he was on his way to Murshidabad and it is clear from the letter of Sykes that he said nothing about the confinement of any woman or child in the Black Hole. On the 17th July, Holwell himself wrote a letter to Council Fort Saint George, but in this letter too he did not say that any woman or child had been confined in the Black Hole. He named some of the survivors and added that the others were seven or eight soldiers whose names he did not know. The persons named did not include Mrs. Carey. Holwell again wrote to Council Fort Saint George on the 3rd August 1756, and gave detailed lists which he had promised in his letter of the 17th July. His lists of the victims and the survivors did not contain the name of Mrs. Carey. The first mention that Holwell made of Mrs. Carey was after eight months when he wrote to his friend from on board the sloop *Syren*. Even then he did not say that several other women and children had suffered like fate.

There are other facts also which go to show that no woman or child was put in the Black Hole. Cooke and Lushington two of the survivors of the Black Hole were released on the 21st and got on board a ship lying near Surman's Garden that very day. They then joined the other fugitives who had escaped on the 18th and the 19th¹. Amongst them were Drake, Captain Grant, Tooke and Lindsay all of whom have left accounts of the capture of Fort William. But they do not say that any woman or child was put in the Black Hole. Tooke states quite definitely that only those who bore arms were taken into custody and subsequently confined in the Black Hole.² This shows that Cooke and Lushington did not tell the Fulta refugees that any woman or child had been confined in the Black Hole.

Other survivors of the Black Hole whose movements can be verified are Captain Mills and his three friends³ who failed to catch the

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1. "Holwell was immediately carried to the Nabob and the rest had orders to go where they pleased. Cooke and Lushington took the peon at his word and immediately set out, arrived on board of the ships the same night, we then laying a little above Bugge Buggee." Letter from William Lindsay to Orme—Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 169.
 2. Tooke's Narrative of the capture of Calcutta, Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 293.
 3. Captain Dixon, Mr. Moran and one other gentleman whose name Captain Mills could not give.—Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 194.

ships on the 21st and after three days' stay in Gobindpore, returned to Calcutta where they lived in the house of Doctor Knox till the 1st July on which date one Muslim was killed by a drunken European soldier and so all the Europeans were ordered to leave Alinagar, as Calcutta was then called. On the 2nd July, Captain Mills and two of his companions ¹ reached Chandernagore where they stayed till the 8th or the 9th July, and on the 10th they joined the refugees at Fulta. We know it from other sources that Messrs. Watts and Collet had reached Chandernagore on the 28th June and remained there for a long time. It can be taken for granted therefore that they must have come in contact with Captain Mills and his companions in the same way as they met George Grey, Junior, whose account of the capture of Calcutta was enclosed by them with their letter to the Court of Directors dated the 16th July. In that letter Watts and Collet gave an account of the Black Hole but they did not say that any woman or child had been confined therein. This they must have done, if Captain Mills and his friends had acquainted them with any such incident. Likewise George Grey, Junior, who had escaped at the time

1. The third died in Calcutta.

when the Fort was captured by Sirajuddaula's men and returning to Calcutta later on, lived with Captain Mills in the house of Doctor Knox till the 1st July, does not say in his account that any woman or child was put in the Black Hole.

We may also note here that Captain Mills joined the refugees at Fulta on the 10th July and we may presume therefore that he gave an account of the Black Hole to Captain Grant, Drake, Lindsay and Tooke. Captain Grant wrote an account of the capture of Calcutta on the 13th July and Drake wrote a narrative on the 19th. Lindsay wrote an account in his letter to Orme which was written in July 1756 and Tooke wrote his account after the 10th November 1756. In none of these accounts, is it mentioned that any woman or child was put in the Black Hole. This shows clearly that Captain Mills did not tell any of the refugees at Fulta that any woman or child had been confined in the Black Hole.

We now come to the Diary of Captain Mills which as we shall see presently, is a clear forgery in as much as it was not written on or about the dates on which it purports to have been written. It forms part of *Orme Manuscripts* and the heading is "1756—June 7 to July 1—*Narrative of*

the loss of Calcutta with the Black Hole by Captain Mills who was in it and sundry other particulars, being Captain Mill's pocket book which he gave me, it is 8vo, 16 pages." In this Diary there is a note to the effect that 144 men, women and children were put in the Black Hole and we are expected to suppose that this note was made between the dates 7th June and 1st July 1756. We have seen however that Captain Mills was released on the morning of the 21st June and that he joined the refugees at Fulta on the 10th July. He did not tell any one at that time that women and children had also shared his fate. This shows that till the 10th July, Captain Mills had not prepared his Diary. It further follows that the note made by Captain Mills that there were women and children in the Black Hole was only an after-thought.

There are other important features of Captain Mills' Diary which must be given due consideration. Page 4 is half blank. Similarly on page 10 only a few names are given in continuation of page 9 and practically the whole of this page is blank. Page 12 is also half blank. Page 13 opens abruptly and has no connection with the previous paragraph. More than half of this page is blank. Page 14 gives an account of powder. One-fourth

of this page is blank. Similarly one-fourth of page 15 is blank.

It is needless for us to point out that so much space was left blank not by accident but with some motive. It was either the intention of the author that his Diary may be considered to have been written from day to day or at least after regular intervals ; or sufficient space was left blank deliberately in order to permit subsequent interpolations without fear of detection. In either case, it is clear that the motive of Captain Mills in preparing his Diary was anything but honest.

The most curious thing about Captain Mills' Diary is that it seems to have been written by two persons. This fact must have been noticed by Mr. Hill when he published the diary in question in his *Bengal Records* but it is strange that Mr. Hill not only refrained from making any comment but also left out a portion of the Diary which would have shown that it was handed over to Orme after the deposition of Mir Jafar.

Page 16 of Captain Mills' Diary opens with the following words :—" On ye 1st of July was ordered out of Calcutta". This is followed by blank space. Then follows :—"Sudberry, a

remarkable fine place for ye Summer season, 18 miles from London.” After that :—“ Alleverdecon the father of Surga Dowla Con, who took Calcutta; after we retook the place, we putt up Myer Jaffar Con and the next year deposed him and made his son-in-law Cossam Ally Con.” The whole of this page seems to have been written by one man whose handwriting is different from the one which appears on pages 1 to 15 of the Diary. The words, “On ye 1st of July was ordered out of Calcutta” do not seem to have been written by Captain Mills if he is supposed to be the writer of pages 1-15. It is also noteworthy that on page 16 the name of Sirajuddaula appears as Surga Dowla but on page 1 it is written as Sur Rajah Dowla. This too proves that the Diary was written by two different persons.

It is not clear why the idea of having a pocket book flashed in the brain of Captain Mills on the 7th June and not earlier. Further if he had this pocket book with himself from the 21st June till he was turned out of Calcutta on the 1st July, then no explanation is forthcoming as to why he did not make notes about the events which occurred during that period, specially those which had a direct bearing upon him. It is curious to find a private diary

lacking in personal touch. Any person in the position of Captain Mills would have noted in his diary at least his disappointment in not catching the ships near Surman's Garden on the 21st, his stay in Gobindpur till the 24th and his return to Calcutta on the 25th¹. But in his Diary Captain Mills makes no reference to these events.

Another curious thing about this Diary is that it is an exact reproduction of George Grey, Junior's account dated the 16th July 1756. There are some slight variations here and there and a large number of spelling mistakes but on the whole, there can be no doubt that this diary was copied, word for word from George Grey, Junior's account. George Grey, Junior, we may note here, does not say in his account that any woman or child was confined in the Black Hole.

Lastly, we come to Cooke who made a brief mention of the Black Hole in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee in the year 1772². He gave out that 150 persons including one woman were confined in the Black Hole and that out of them 22 came out alive. The fact that he too falsely introduced one woman after a long interval shows

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 194.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 302.

that there was a conspiracy between Holwell, Captain Mills, John, Cooke and Mrs. Carey and that the latter's name was added to the list of persons said to have been confined in the Black Hole with their common consent. The introduction of Mrs. Carey further shows that Holwell, Captain Mills and John Cooke were acting in concert from the very beginning and as we shall see later on, the story of the Black Hole which was nothing but a myth was the product of their joint deliberations. Mr. Holwell however committed the folly of being overwise and in his attempt to manufacture evidence by setting up Mrs. Carey as a survivor of the Black Hole and a supporter of his story, he gave the whole show away. Truly has it been said that liars have no memory.

CHAPTER III.

PROOF POSITIVE.

Holwell, in his letter to the Court of Directors, dated Fulta, the 30th November 1756, says :—

“ I have now brought you, Honourable Sirs, to the fifth and last act of our tragedy of errors, which brought on as fatal and melancholy a catastrophe I believe, as ever the annals of any people, or colony of people, suffered since the days of Adam; to wit, the Governor, Messrs. Manningham, Frankland, Macket, the principal officers, and a considerable part of the colony, abandoning your fort, effects, and garrison, with the ships and vessels, whereby the retreat of those who remained was to all intents and purposes cut off, to the number of about 170 persons, and left a sacrifice to an exasperated and merciless enemy.”¹

In his letter to the Court of Directors, dated the 10th August, 1757, he reiterates that the number of persons left in the Factory did not exceed 170.² Forrest, however, makes the number

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 38.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 358.

190¹ but in view of the definite assertion of Holwell there does not seem to be any ground for this liberality. Taking the number of persons left in Fort William to be 170, on no less an authority than that of Holwell himself who has been called by Busted to be ‘the historian *par excellence* of the Black Hole’, our next task would be to find out how many of them were Europeans. In order to do this, it would be necessary first of all to ascertain the total number of Europeans who were in Fort William when the attack began.

We are indebted to Orme for a ‘list of inhabitants and others who bore arms at the late siege of Calcutta, June 1756’², which is to be found in *Orme Manuscripts, India IV*, pages 951-956 and *O. V., 19*, pages 61-64. This list has been published by Hill in *Bengal Records*, 1756-57³ but the date 1st July is a mistake. From this list

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1. “The whole force which he [Holwell] could muster in defence of the fort, including the militia amounted only to 190 men.”—*Life of Lord Clive*, vol. I, p. 308.
 2. “The Court allowed no one out to India without a pass, and were rather chary of increasing the number of European ladies. Annual lists of all residents in Calcutta had to be sent to London which were carefully examined, as for instance, the Court refer to a Miss Christiana Ross who was, returned as an inhabitant of Calcutta in 1754, when ‘as was well-known to the public, she had returned to Europe in a French ship.’—Long’s *Government Records*, p. 68.

Vol. III, p. 415. Some portion of this document has been left out by Hill.

it appears that there were 50 Company's servants, 19 military officers, 102 Free merchants, 50 seafaring men, 35 European soldiers, 25 European artillery-men, 190 Topaz soldiers, 50 Portuguese and Armenian militia, 18 sick and invalid; in all 213 armed Europeans on shore and 23 armed Europeans on board the ships, thus making a total of 236 armed Europeans and 240 armed Topazes, the grand total coming to 476.

Some of the subordinate totals given in this list are overlapping. For example, O' Hara has been shown as Company's servant and also as a military officer. Similarly, 33 Free merchants have been shown as sea-captains and officers. There is also an error in the total of Free merchants and other inhabitants which should have been 109 and not 102. This mistake is due to the fact that seven persons have been left unclassified although one of them has been shown as sick and the rest as armed. The grand total of armed Europeans is however correct because 50 Company's servants plus 19 military officers plus 109 Free merchants plus 50 seafaring men plus 35 European soldiers plus 25 European artillery-men comes to 288, from which deducting 34 counted twice (O' Hara and 33 Free merchants), and 18 shown as sick or invalid we get 236 which

was the number of armed Europeans,—213 on the shore and 23 on board the ships.

Orme, however, in his *History of Military Transactions in Indostan*, says as follows:—

“No resource therefore remained but in their own force which was indeed very inadequate to the contest for although the regular garrison consisted of 264 men and the inhabitants serving as militia were 250, in all 514 men, yet only 174 of this number were Europeans and ‘of these not ten had seen any other than the service of the parade; the rest were Topazes, Armenians and Portuguese inhabitants, on whose truth or spirit no reliance could be placed.”

This shows that Orme did not accept the figures given in the list referred to above. The discrepancy seems to be due to the fact that many persons mentioned in the list as Free merchants and other inhabitants, particularly the fiddlers and those described as foreigners and pilots were probably half-bred Indo-Portuguese who were counted as Europeans by mistake. The number of Europeans given in the ‘list of persons who bore arms’ does not appear to be free from doubt and it is necessary therefore that we should

examine other documents on this point. Holwell in his letter to Councils, Bombay and Fort St. George, dated the 17th July 1756, writes as follows:—

“ We had flattered ourselves that we should have mustered between 5 [or] 600 effective men, Europeans, Blacks and militia, inhabitants and those belonging to the shipping but to our utter astonishment when our military roll was returned in Council it consisted only of 45 of the Train and 145 infantry and in both only 60 Europeans; in the militia were about 100 Armenians who were entirely useless and more than that number amongst the Black militia boys and slaves, who were not capable of holding a musket; so that in fact when the seafaring people who most of them appeared only at the first muster, were draughted off on board the vessels (of which we had in port about 30 sail of every craft at least) our garrison did not consist of 250 fighting men, officers included”.¹

Drake in his ‘ *Narrative of the succession of Souragud Dowlet to the provinces of Bengal, Bahar and Orixa and of the siege of Calcutta taken by escalade the 20th June, 1756* ’ writes as follows:—

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 110.

“The certain intelligence of the capture of our fort at Cossimbuzar and of Souragud Dowlet’s intention to proceed directly to Calcutta made us seriously to consider what defence we could make for the reception of an enemy who were flushed with hopes that they might obtain by craftiness and deceit as easy a surrender of our capital settlement in Bengal, nothing near so defensible and labouring under a variety of disadvantages from its situation. Accordingly we again sent for the Commandant and officers to inquire into the state of our garrison, who reported that there were upwards of seventy men sick in the hospital and quarters and on parties up and down the river twenty-five. That the remainder were chiefly Portuguese consisting of about one hundred eighty, exclusive of the artillery company.”¹

While we are on this point, we may note that Holwell in his letter to the Court of Directors, dated the 10th August 1757,² challenges the accuracy of the statement that there were 70 men sick in the hospital and quarters. He says, “I did not ’tis true, mention the 70 men in sick quarters, because, on enquiry, I could not find there was one.” It does not matter much to us

1. Hill’s *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 129.

2. Hill’s *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 359.

however, whether there were any soldiers sick in hospital or quarters because we know it for certain that only those who bore arms were made prisoners when Fort William was captured. Says Tooke, "The remainder who bore arms about 147 were crammed at night in prison and remained there till next morning, when the prison-doors were opened to let what remained alive out, whose number I think did not exceed 23." Similarly Lindsay in his 'letter to Orme, concerning the loss of Calcutta' writes, "About half an hour after this the Moors scaled the walls on all quarters in a manner almost incredible to Europeans. The gentlemen below drew out and were resolved to die rather than be taken when one of the *Jemindars* advanced and told them they should not be hurt, if they would lay down their arms, the soldiers immediately grounded theirs and the gentlemen were obliged to do the same. At first they used the gentlemen pretty well but some of the soldiers getting drunk, they were all ordered into the Black Hole without distinction to the number of about two hundred." ²

An account of 'the Troubles in Bengal',

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 293.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 168.

which is to be found in the British Museum endorses the view that only those who bore arms were made prisoners. It runs thus :—

“ Upon the garrison delivering up their arms, he seemed to be inclined to dismiss them with order to quit his dominions as soon as possible, but some of the aforesaid sergeant’s guard having got drunk with the reward of their treachery, they treated some of the Nabob’s soldiers abusively ; upon complaint thereof to the Nabob he enquired in what [way] the English punished such crimes ; he was informed by some of the Black inhabitants they were usually put into the Black Hole until they became sober ; he accordingly ordered all the prisoners, without distinction to the number of 140, to be thrust into a small dungeon in the Factory.” ¹

To proceed with the narrative of Drake, “The 7th June in the evening the militia were under arms and were ordered to attend early on the parade the next morning in order that the several commissions should be read and they properly formed into companies. The numbers which appeared amounted to upwards of two hundred and fifty, about one hundred of them were Europeans,

1. Hill’s *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 154.

part of whom were called off their duty in the shipping and could not well be reckoned as Militia. The remainder were country-born Portuguese and Armenians.....
The several commissions being delivered the militia were formed into three companies. But finding the Portuguese and Armenians extremely awkward at their arms it was judged proper that one company should consist entirely of Europeans."

Drake proceeds to say, "On Friday the 11th June having received certain intelligence that the Nabob had crossed the river of Kisnagar with a great number of cannon it was resolved that a general review should be had of our whole force the next morning.....and the next morning there appeared under arms as follows:—

Military (of these not above 45	180.
Europeans).	
Volunteers (European)	... 50.
Militia (Europeans)	... 60.
Militia (Armenians and Portuguese)	150.
Artillery (Europeans)	... 35.
Volunteers (consisting of sea-officers	40.
and Portuguese helmsmen),	—
	515.

Drake is corroborated in part by William Lindsay who in his 'letter to Orme, concerning the loss of Calcutta, dated *Syren* Sloop, off Fulta—July 1757' writes as follows :—

"One of the *Zemindars* we took prisoner declared to us that the Nabob's army consisted of 18,000 horse and 30,000 foot, three thousand elephants and camels and a large Train of artillery, to oppose which force we had as follows, military 180 of these not above 40 Europeans, and volunteers 50, militia 60 Europeans, militia 150 Portuguese and Armenians, artillery 35, volunteers 40 consisting of sea-officers and helmsmen, in all 515."¹ The important point to note is that Lindsay reduces the number of Europeans in the military by 5. According to him it was only 40 whereas Drake makes it 45.

Tooke reduces the number still further. In his *Narrative of the Capture of Calcutta*, he says, "Though the Company allow six companies here, including one of artillery, consisting each of 120 effective men, when they came to be mustered turned out only 190 Blacks and 60 Europeans."² It is not disputed that in

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I., p. 171.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I., p. 289

the artillery there were 35 Europeans and so we find that according to Tooke, there were only 25 Europeans in the infantry against 45, the number given by Drake and 40, by Lindsay.

Captain Grant in his letter dated the 13th July, 1756, says that the infantry consisted of 180 soldiers, 'of which number, there were not 40 Europeans.'¹ According to Holwell, as we have stated above, the Europeans in the artillery and the infantry numbered only 60. The same view was expressed by Cooke who in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee gave out that the garrison did not exceed 170 effective men, out of whom not above 50 or 60 were Europeans.²

To sum up, the statement of Drake that there were 45 Europeans in the infantry, is not supported by any one. Lindsay has reduced their number to 40 and Captain Grant to less than 40. But from the statements of Holwell, Tooke and Cooke, it appears that the number of Europeans in the infantry did not exceed 25. In the list of persons who bore arms, the number given is 35 Europeans in the infantry and 25 in the artillery. But we

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 379.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 292.

know it definitely from other sources that there were 35 Europeans in the artillery and the number given in the list in question is therefore incorrect. It is quite likely that the figures 25 and 35 shown against the Europeans in the artillery and the infantry are mistakes for 35 and 25 respectively. The matter is, however, not free from doubt and to be on the safe side we shall hold with Drake that there were 45 Europeans in the infantry besides 35 in the artillery. In addition to them, there were fifty Europeans who got themselves enlisted as volunteers and 60 others who joined the militia. There were also forty sea-officers and Portuguese helmsmen who attended the muster on the 11th June. As Holwell says they returned to the ships after the first parade but Tooke in his *Narrative of the Capture of Calcutta* says that only 23 of them 'were obliged to attend the shipping they belonged to.' This shows that seventeen of them remained on shore. We are not sure whether all these seventeen persons were Europeans but in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, we may hold that this was so. The total number of Europeans in Fort William comes therefore to 207.

We shall now try to ascertain the casualties amongst the Europeans during the period which

preceded the desertion of Fort William by Drake. Says Drake, ' "To the period of time the 16th of June at half past one in the afternoon we were not disturbed with the noise of our enemies' cannon, when we received an alarm that an advanced party of the enemy, consisting of 4000 men and some artillery, were attempting a passage at Baugbazar and that they had raised a battery of eight pieces of cannon to play on the redoubt. On this advice it was thought proper to reinforce Ensign Paccard's party and accordingly a detachment under the command of Lieutenant Blagg with two field pieces were ordered to march to his relief with the utmost expedition. The cannon of the enemy played chiefly on one of the two sloops which lay before the redoubt and killed five men. On the approach of our field pieces the enemy soon ceased their firing, attempting only to gaul us with their musquetry by keeping themselves concealed behind bushes and as little exposed as possible. Here we lost Mr Thoresby one of the Volunteers and three European soldiers who had advanced beyond the redoubt. Before dark the enemy was entirely drove off and retreated to the eastward, on which Captain Clayton was detached with a small₃ party to cover the retreat of

Lieutenant Blagg. This step was thought necessary as they were to pass a number of small avenues lest they should have been interrupted and cut off ”.

It appears from Drake's account that on the 16th, four Europeans were killed. The number left amounted therefore to 203. The 17th was spent by the Nawab in bringing his army within Calcutta and very little of actual fighting seems to have taken place this day. This was so, because the main attack on Fort William was purposely deferred till the 18th which happened to be a Friday and was considered by the Nawab to be an auspicious day for making an assault.¹ To quote Drake again,² “ In the morning of the 17th June large parties began to advance towards our northern and eastern batteries and indeed surrounded about two-thirds of our lines, advancing their cannon in the different avenues as they approached. From the northern battery, Lieutenant Sumner and Ensign Walcott were detached with a small party of military and militia with a field piece to secure the principal avenues leading to that battery against which a party with a European at their

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 145.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 146.

head seemed to be forming a design of erecting one, but our cannon soon dispersed them and we had no further molestation that day at that quarter except that the plunderers who came close up to some breastworks within that command kept our musquetry in full employ. Their whole force now seemed to be bent against our battery which was commanded by Captains Clayton and Holwell, but soon perceived their intention was not to expose themselves to our batteries but that their dependence was on their great numbers to force themselves into the unguarded parts of our lines and to take possession of our houses to annoy us with their small arms; for this reason we detached several small parties to guard such dwellings that we were most exposed to, but with so small a force it was impossible to detach the least force to them all, at most being able only to spare a sergeant and ten men to any of the houses we did take possession of Another step pursued this day was to take possession of the Goal ¹ which commanded the grand avenues leading to the eastern battery. There we posted two small guns mounted on ship carriages and made loop-holes fronting that battery. That command was given to Monsieur Le Beaume, a

1. [Jail].

French officer who had left that flag thinking himself ill-used and who on this occasion manifested great courage and conduct.”

We now come to the events of the 18th. It is admitted on all hands that this day there was severe fighting at the Jail. It appears from the account given by Drake that on the 17th Monsieur Le Beaume had occupied the Jail with 6 military, 6 militia and 40 *Buxeries*. But Holwell in his letter to Council, Fort Saint George, dated the 17th July, says definitely that on the 17th June all the *Buxeries*, 700 in number, fled to a man from the outposts. He is corroborated by Captain Grant who says, “This night [17th] all our *peons* deserted us and in short every black fellow, who could make his escape abandoned us.”¹ It follows therefore that the *Buxeries* who were with Le Beaume left the Jail on the 17th night. It is not known what Le Beaume did after this desertion but this much is certain that on the 18th when Sirajuddaula’s army appeared before the Jail, it was defended not by the 6 militia and the 6 military who had been posted there on the 17th June. Holwell who with Captain Clayton was in joint command of the Court House Battery

1. Hill’s *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 80.

which was at a distance of 200 yards only from the Jail says unequivocally that the Jail was defended by 32 men who were detached from the advanced post at the Court House Battery ¹. He is supported by Tooke who says that Monsieur Le Beaume was sent with seventeen men from Captain Clayton's battery to defend the Jail and that he received subsequent reinforcements from the same source ².

From the account given by Holwell it is clear that the Jail was defended by 32 men who were detached from the Court House Battery. Holwell does not say however whether all or only some of them were Europeans. But Captain Mills gives us a very valuable clue. ³ He says, "On the 18th of June, we despatched several small parties to the tops of several of the highest houses near hand to annoy the enemy, and Monsieur Labonne with a party of militia and volunteers and two field-pieces to guard the cross-roads [near the Jail]." This shows that the 32 men detached from the Court House Battery were partly militia and partly volunteers and we know it from other sources that the militia as well as the volunteers attached to the

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I., p. 111.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I., p. 258.

3. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I., p. 40.

Court House Battery consisted entirely of Europeans.¹ It follows therefore that the 32 men detached from the Court House Battery were all Europeans.

Hill in his Introduction to *Bengal Records* very aptly describes the fighting at the Jail as fierce. Holwell gives the following description in his letter to the Court of Directors, dated the 30th November 1756²:—"The troops that defended this post sustained the enemy's attack for some time in the open road, before the Jail, with two field-pieces and their small arms; but being entirely open to the enemy, and having some killed and several wounded, they were obliged at last to retreat under cover into the Jail with their field-pieces, having before prepared two embrasures for them in the wall, which commanded the avenue through which the enemy was advancing, and the post was obstinately and gallantly defended for a great while, under the command of Monsieur Le Beaume and Ensign Carstairs." Captain Grant says, "About 11 o'clock they [the

1. Drake says in his Narrative, "On Friday the 11th June..... the forces were marched off the parade in the following manner. To the Court House Battery---Military 50, Volunteers 20, European Militia 20, Artillery 8." The volunteers and the artillery-men consisted entirely of Europeans---Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I., p. 137.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II., p. 33.

Nawab's men] brought up two pieces of cannon against the Goal, one of them an 18 pounder by the size of the ball. We advanced an officer with 20 men and two field-pieces to reinforce Monsieur Le Beaume, but the walls of the Goalhouse were so weak that they were hardly any defence against their cannon. However they kept possession of it till about 2 when Le Beaume and Ensign Carstairs (who commanded the party) being both wounded, and numbers of their men killed, had liberty to retire within Captain Clayton's battery." ¹ Lindsay gives a fuller account and says, "The enemy about 8 o'clock were advancing down the road opposite to the Goal with two large pieces of cannon, where they were very warmly received by the advance guard from the Court House battery, which battery was commanded by Captains Clayton and Holwell. The dispute lasted for several hours, but the enemy getting possession of the adjacent houses galled our men so much that they had an order from the battery to retire into the goal. This was between 11 and 12 o'clock. There continued a very warm fire to and from the goal till about 1 o'clock. Many of our men being killed, they were obliged to retire to the battery." ²

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 80.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 164.

As regards the number of men killed in course of fighting at the Jail, all the accounts agree that the casualties on the side of Le Beaume and Carstairs were very heavy. Drake is specific and says that they lost three-fourths of their men. The attacking force consisted according to Holwell, of '5000 chosen men and officers'¹ who made good use of two pieces of cannon and after driving the small force of Le Beaume to the four-walls of the Jail, captured most of the neighbouring houses and from their tops poured a deadly fire within the Jail for hours together. The statement of Drake that Le Beaume and Carstairs lost three-fourths of their men is amply corroborated by circumstances and agreeing with him, we find that out of the 32 Europeans who were with them, as many as 24 lost their lives in defending the Jail.

We now come to the events which followed the evacuation of the Jail. Says Drake in his Narrative, "The Goal being evacuated by our people, the Moors immediately took possession thereof, the Playhouse and other adjacent houses having cannon planted under cover of a wall close to the Playhouse. From these their possessions they kept so hot and continual a fire on our eastern

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 33.

battery and on the houses we had pretended to guard as to force those small parties to quit their station and retire to Captains Clayton and Holwell their command. The enemy lost no advantage having thrown in great numbers between the houses of Messrs. Margas and Minchin, occupying every place which could command the eastern battery, and they were so well covered from every quarter that the cannon there could not annoy them and they stood the fire of our field-pieces and small arms with great resolution. In order to batter the houses where the Moors were lodged an eighteen pounder was brought up from the fort and we were put to the shift of drawing up this large cannon by the aid of the militia, the *cooleys* having deserted. With the fire of this cannon the Moors were drove out of some of the houses and numbers of them were killed but the houses being so numerous and each of them possessed by the enemy there was no possibility of silencing the continual fire they kept on the eastern battery which on the contrary hourly increased. The factory was annoyed from nine in the morning until the close of the evening with cannon-shot, partridge and fire arrows from the enemy during which time the fort fired their cannon and threw cohorn and mortar shells from the bastions and rampart commanding the eastward part of the

town, which was found to do execution at the Goal and several of the houses, and once a shout was heard that the Nabob's forces had retired from that quarter being drove in great numbers out of the Playhouse, which was again soon filled with people. Captain Clayton judging that his post could not be held until next morning desired Mr. Holwell to bring us that report to the factory, which he did in the evening after having held argument thereon with Captain Clayton. The report was that the enemy pressed hard on them, that they were surrounded on all sides except in the avenues leading to the factory and that they thought the post no longer defensible and requested leave to retreat. On which as we were highly sensible how material it was to keep possession of that battery a reinforcement was ordered thereto with positive orders not to quit, if possible to be defended until next day, when we imagined from the number of men slain of the enemies by the fire from the fort and other places a terror might seize them in the night and that they would decamp if we continued to appear resolute, fearful that we should fall on them but before Mr. Holwell returned to Captain Clayton, or the succours arrived, he had beat the retreat which greatly astonished the several military and militia in that command, coming only away with

their field-pieces on which an exulting noise was heard from the enemy who immediately entered our lines between Mr. Nixon's and Captain Minchin's houses to the south-east. Captain Buchanan's battery being at some distance advanced to the southward was now left liable to be cut off from any communication to the fort for which reason he had before been ordered to retire with his guns to another inner battery erected for that purpose, commanding the same avenue as the further advanced battery did and which was now thought too risquous to endeavour maintaining as also the northern battery, both of which were recalled, the enemy having possession of the Court House and Eastern battery. This retreat gave every body no small shock, being sensible how little able we were to defend ourselves in a fort which was from every quarter overlooked by houses, joined with the appearance of our field-pieces and ammunition being brought in by our own small forces almost every *Cooley* and *Lascar* having taken to flight, so that the great guns on the outward batteries could not be brought in, they were therefore spiked up and dismounted."

Tooke in his *Narrative of the Capture of Calcutta* gives details of several small parties sent to occupy different houses on the 18th before the

retreat of the batteries mentioned by Drake. One of these parties consisted of Lieutenant Blagg and ten volunteers who were posted at the top of Captain Minchin's house. Says Tooke, "Lieutenant Blagg and the volunteers under his command posted at the top of Captain Minchin's house were but in an indifferent situation, for about 3 o'clock in the afternoon Captain Clayton withdrew the sergeant and 16 men who defended the next house to them, and soon after the sergeant and sixteen men, who defended the breast-work at Mrs. Putham's, basely running away (on one of his men being killed) left them greatly exposed to the enemy, who immediately took possession of all the houses round about, nay even of that house itself, and barricaded the doors upto the very top of the house, which passage to the top being very narrow they did not dare to attempt; in which situation they continued till near 7 o'clock, received the fire of the enemy from every part, as likewise were in no small danger from our own guns at the factory which were at that time playing very smartly on the enemy at that quarter; when all their ammunition being expended, obliged them to take a resolution to force open the doors and fight their way through with their bayonets, especially as by that time all the batteries were withdrawn and but one attempt made to relieve them, which party

was repulsed by the enemy ; so looking upon themselves as a forlorn hope were willing to extricate themselves the best they could. Accordingly the door was burst open, and upon endeavouring to retreat to a lane at the back of the house leading to the Rope Walk in hopes to get under shelter of our own guns, found the enemy so numerous as rendered that passage impracticable, and here Messrs. Smith and Wilkinson two of the party having imprudently advanced a little too far, were cut to pieces, though the first killed 4 or 5 of the enemy before he fell ; the remainder by making good use of their bayonets (not having a single charge left) gained the front gate of the house."

The account given by Tooke shows that on the 18th two Europeans were killed in addition to twenty-four others who had lost their lives in defending the cross-roads and the Jail. So in all 30 Europeans were killed by the 18th June,—4 on the 16th, none on the 17th and 26 on the 18th. Coming now to the 19th, we find the following account by Drake :—

" At break of day, the 19th June, things were found in as dreadful a situation as was expected. Many of the soldiers and Portuguese and Armenian militia unfit for duty, no preparations for getting any provisions dressed which caused great murmur-

ings and complaint. However in this situation we did not doubt but those men who could not be roused at night would on the appearance of day gladly take to their arms and assist their utmost to repulse an enemy, from whom no quarter was expected if taken prisoners, but vain were our expectations for though we beat incessantly to arms scarce a man appeared of the Portuguese and Armenian militia or our soldiery, until the Governor, Messrs. Holwell and Baillie went through every part of the factory where many had hid themselves to encourage and bring them to their duty to which they came but very faintly. The southerly new *Godowns*, on which were mounted cannon, being quite exposed to the enemy's fire from the Company's House, we endeavoured to carry up bales of cotton which were landed from the *Dadley* but for want of hands we were obliged to empty rice bags and fill them, some few of which we were able to get up before the Moors began to fire on us very warmly from the eastward and southward and attack our detachments which were guarding the Church, Messrs. Cruttenden's and Eyre's houses. It became now our duty to fire briskly on them from our two bastions on the land side and from the curtains to cover our people in the Church and those houses but to very little purpose the forces against us

being concealed under adjacent walls behind and in possession of houses close thereby. It may not be improper to mention here that the Moors had not possessed themselves of the Company's House as was expected and looking on that place as of the utmost consequence (being not only necessary to defend our men on the southerly curtain but useful in protecting the boats, few of which remained, from deserting or being carried away though the utmost care had been taken to keep them together by placing *peons* as a guard over them) Ensign Paccard with twenty-five military were there placed. At sunrise we perceived that a numerous body of the enemy were advancing on us from the eastward, they had in the night taken shelter of the battery quitted by Captain Clayton and had mounted cannon thereby. They also threw up a battery by Mr. Bellamy's habitation and had brought cannon to several other places where they could annoy us keeping a constant fire on our outposts and bastions therewith and with their small arms. Those in the factory returned their fire so fast that it was several times forbid the extravagant expense of powder which there would be soon occasion of want thereof to use. Numbers of the enemy were perceived to fall but their numbers increasing from every [side] we found it

impossible to repulse them. At eight this morning Lieutenant Bishop, who was posted with a party of men in Mr. Eyre his house, desired leave to retire into the fort, the enemy galling them so much from the contiguous houses that it was impossible to maintain it any longer. As the suffering this party to retreat into the fort would necessarily occasion the same orders to be given to all the outposts (for on the enemy's placing themselves there it would be an impossibility to maintain the Church or Mr. Cruttenden's house), Mr. Bishop was ordered to remain if possible until the evening, it being of the utmost consequence that he should do so that the general retreat might be made pursuant to our resolutions the night preceding, but on his further pressing the necessity thereof, many of his men being killed, it was thought requisite to comply therewith and he and his party were then ordered to reinforce Captain Clayton in the Church, who about this time came to the Factory and declared he was so beset by the enemy that he could no longer dwell there with his party and that some of them were killed. Soon after Ensign Paccard was brought from the Company's House wounded and his party came in, the enemy some of them having entered the yard of the said house. The Moors having now obtained lodgment in Mr. Eyre's and

Company's houses the other outposts were permitted to quit their stations and our bastions and curtains were supplied with an additional number of men who kept up a vigorous fire on the Nabob's forces, which pressed on with great resolution."

The foregoing paragraph gives a clear indication of the serious nature of fighting on the 19th, till before the flight of Drake. The party of Bishop consisted of 25 military and that of Clayton, of 25 military and militia. Ensign Paccard had also 25 military and militia. It is not possible however to ascertain the proportion of Europeans to others in these parties. Nor can we say definitely that any European was killed as a result of the fighting on the 19th morning. We shall therefore pass on to the next event namely the flight of Drake.

Holwell in his letter to the Council, Fort Saint George, dated Hugli, the 3rd August 1756, has given a list of those persons who quitted Fort William on the 18th and the 19th June 1756. The following names are mentioned:—

Governor Drake.

Colonel Manningham.

Lieutenant-Colonel Frankland.

Mr. Mackett, 2nd Captain, Militia.

Captain Minchin, Commandant.

Captain Grant, Adjutant-General.

Rev. Mr. Mapletoft, Captain Lieutenant, Militia.

Charles O' Hara Ensign and Lieutenant,
Train.

Henry Wedderburn, Lieutenant, Militia.

Charles Douglas, Ensign, Militia.

Thomas Holmes, Lieutenant, Militia.

William Sumner, Lieutenant, Militia.

Robert Halsey Baldrick, Ensign, Militia.

Volunteers.

Mr. William Ellis.

Mr. William Billers.

Mr. William Rider.

Mr. Ascanius Senior.

Mr. William Orr.

Mr. Francis Vasmor.

Mr. Robert Leicester.

Mr. Stephen Page.

Mr. William Tooke.

Mr. Francis Charlton.

Mr.—Champion.

Captain Lodwick Lord, wounded.

Captain—Campbell.

Militia.

Mr. Edward Holden Cruttenden.

Mr. Anselm Beaumont.

Captain David Rannie.
Mr. William Nixon.
Mr. John Putham.
Captain Nicholson and officers.
Captain Austin and officers.
Mr. William Lindsay.
Captain Whatmough and officers.
Captain Young and do.
Mr. Margass.
Mr. Pyfinch.
Captain Walmsley.
William Burton.
Monsieur Albert.
Monsieur Carvallo.
Mr. John Wood.
Captain Laing.
Henry Sumus (Summers).
Captain Hugh Baillie.
Edward Ridge.
William Elves.
Daniel Whaley.
William Ling.
John Strousenberg.
John Helmstead and etc.

Doctors.

William Fullerton.

The above list gives the names of 53 Euro-

peans and mentions at least eight officers of the militia in addition to the 53 persons who have been named. It is not possible however to find out who these officers were and we shall therefore take no notice of them¹. On the eve of the attack, there were 207 Europeans in Fort William and out of them 4 were killed on the 16th, none on the 17th, 26 on the 18th, and 53 fled away on the 18th and the 19th, thus making 83 in all. The number of Europeans left in Fort William on the 19th after Drake's flight was therefore 124.

We have already quoted Holwell to show that after the flight of Drake there were only 170 persons left in Fort William² and it appears that out

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1. Tooke says, "The next morning, being the 8th June, two companies of militia were formed, one under the command of Captain John Zephaniah Holwell and the other under Captain William Macket; and the following gentlemen were appointed officers under them, viz. Robert Mapletoft, Captain Lieutenant, Richard Court, H. Wedderburn, T. Holmes, and William Sumner, Lieutenants, C. Douglas, T. Coales and R. H. Baldrick, Ensigns; and William Dumbleton, Adjutant." Macket, Mapletoft, Wedderburn, Holmes, Sumner, Baldrick and Douglas are included in the list given by Holwell and Dumbleton, Coales and Court are mentioned by him, as having been left in the fort. It is doubtful therefore whether there were any other officers of the militia.
 2. "Those remaining, including officers, volunteers, soldiers and militia, did not exceed one hundred and seventy men."—Holwell's letter to the Court of Directors dated the 30th November 1756.

of them 124 were Europeans, the rest (46) being Portuguese and Armenians. Mr. Hill in his Introduction to *Bengal Records* says that without counting the Armenians and the Portuguese they (the remnants of the inmates in the fort) found that they numbered 170 men capable of defence. Although he does not say it in so many words but he means to say that 170 Europeans were left. This is however a statement which is not only without any authority but also *prima-facie* absurd ¹, since the total number of Europeans in Fort William at the time of attack did not exceed 207.

We now come to the events which followed the flight of Drake. Holwell in his letter to Councils, Bombay and Fort Saint George, dated Murshidabad, the 17th July 1756, says as follows :—

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1. In his foot-note Mr. Hill quotes Law as his authority. All that the latter says is that "there were left, owing to the impossibility of getting on board, more than 200 men with whom Mr. Holwell held out for a part of the day." There is nothing in Law's account to show that there were 200 men left excluding the Portuguese and the Armenians. Law moreover admits that he is not certain about the correctness of the details, and refers the reader to what the English themselves had written. His inaccuracy is patent from the fact that according to him the flight took place on the 20th and Holwell held out only for a part of the day (Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 169).

“On the Governor etc’s desertion being known the garrison fell into the utmost confusion and tumults, when the gentlemen remaining of the Council, officers and others, entreated I would immediately take upon me the Government of the fort, as the only means of quieting the present tumults which must have ended in the destruction of the whole. A council was directly called and Mr. Pearkes waiving his right of seniority, himself, Messrs. Eyre and Baillie appointed me Governor of the fort and administrator of the Honourable Company’s affairs during the troubles, in which light I was recognised by the whole garrison. I immediately visited every post and soon quieted the minds of the people, by assuring them they should have three chests of treasure divided amongst the soldiers and militia, if they would defend the fort until we could make a general retreat with all the Company’s effect and that I would be the last man that quitted the fort. At the council held as above, we suspended the President and the gentlemen of the Council and officers with him from the Company’s service, it being the only just piece of resentment in our power, for the cruel piece of treachery they had been guilty of to the whole garrison as well as breach of trust to their Employers. We likewise sent an order to Captain Hague, Commander of the Company’s

ship *Saint George* stationed at Baagbazar to weigh and immediately drop down opposite the lane between the new *godowns* of the factory and the Company's House : these new *godowns* being the weakest part of the fort and not flanked by any gun from itAs she then was the only remaining chance we had for a general retreat, three or four boats being yet with her, Mr. Pearkes was so obliging as to tender himself with three or four volunteers on this service and went on board accordingly, but the pilot neither that day nor the next would undertake to bring her lower than opposite to Mr. Watt's house where she was useless to us. To return to our situation the 19th after the President's desertion from Council I had hardly gone round the ramparts before the enemy attacked the fort incessantly the whole remainder of the day from their batteries and small arms ; of the former from the battery we had raised at the Court House, from another they had erected in Mr. Allsop's compound between the Court House and the jail, from a third erected at the southwest corner of the Park, from a fourth in the Reverend Mr. Bellamy's Compound and from a small battery they had raised at the Dock Head. They fired so wildly from their batteries they would not have made a breach in twelve months though they fired from 18 pounders, but their

small arms from the houses round us, particularly the Company's, Captain Rannie's, and Mr. Cruttenden's annoyed us much, from whence we several times dislodged them with great slaughter and obliged them at last to set fire to them and to abandon them. The 19th at night our people had some recess but were obliged to sleep on their arms."

George Grey, Junior, who was in the Fort till the 20th and according to Captain Mills escaped at the time when the Fort was taken, says in his *Account of the loss of Calcutta* that on the night of the 19th a corporal and 56 men, most of them Dutch deserted us and went over the walls to the enemy.' He is corroborated by Captain Mills who says as follows:—

"The Dutch soldiers could not be hindered from breaking into the rooms of the officers that had absconded, the military and gunroom mostly consisting of that country, and taking from thence what wine and spirits they could lay their hands on, by which means they began to be mutinous and unruly. In the night a corporal and several private men, most of them Dutch, deserted us by dropping over the walls and going to the enemy." Messrs. Watts and Collet in their letter to the Court of Directors, dated

Chandernagore the 16th July 1756, accept the number given by George Grey, Junior, in the following words :—" But when the Governor and others were gone, the soldiers got to their liquors and wine under no command. Fifty-six of the soldiers that were Dutch deserted that night, after which all was tumult, disorder and confusion which we imagine occasioned the gentlemen to hoist a flag of truce in order to capitulate."

We find it established from these accounts that on the 19th, after the flight of Drake, Mr. Pearkes and at least three volunteers who were all Europeans left the Fort in order to bring the ship *Prince George*¹. We further find that on the 19th night one Dutch corporal with 56 men deserted to the Nawab. According to Watts and Collet they were all Europeans but George Grey, Junior, uses the word mostly which shows that at least three-fourths of them were Europeans. We find it proved, therefore, that 42 European soldiers and one European corporal left the fort on the 19th night. So by the 20th morning, the number of Europeans in Fort William was reduced by 47. The Europeans that remained in the Fort did not number more than 77 and the Armenians and the Portuguese were reduced to 32.

1. Miscalled *Saint George* by Holwell.

We now come to the 20th June, known as the most fatal Sunday in Calcutta. Says Holwell in his letter to Councils, Bombay and Fort St. George, dated Murshidabad, the 17th July 1756:—"The 20th in the morning the enemy formed three assaults at once against the north-west bastion, against the north-west *futtock* or barrier, and against the windows of the laboratory on the eastern curtain, and attempted to scale to the north-westward. From each of these assaults they were beat off with great loss to them before noon and a general cessation in a manner ensued for some hours, when finding we had 25 killed and 70 or more of our best men wounded, and our Train killed, wounded and deserted to all but 14, and not two hours ammunition left, we threw out a flag of truce towards the evening, intending to amuse the enemy and make the best retreat we could in the night to the *Saint George*, not then knowing that she was on a sand opposite to Omichand's house."

Captain Grant in his *Account of the Capture of Calcutta* says :—"The place was taken next day the 20th afternoon, about 30 hours after the Governor left it, during which time upwards of 50 Europeans were killed on the bastions by the enemy's small arms from Mr. Cruttenden's, Eyres's the Church and the Company's House. The firing

was so hot from the top of the Church that they at last were obliged to abandon the easterly curtain and bastions. About 3 afternoon they made a signal for a truce; on which our people desisted [from] firing. But they treacherously made use of it to crowd in multitudes under the walls, and with some ladders and bamboos scaled the easterly curtain and bastions which were abandoned under cover of their fire from the Church and other houses. Numbers were cut to pieces on the walls; all who wore red coats, without mercy."

At the first sight it would appear that Captain Grant has given an exaggerated account of the casualties on the 20th but if we go into the matter deeply, we shall find that he has only lumped together at one place, the losses suffered by the English during the whole of the day. As Holwell says 25 men were killed before noon on the 20th ¹, after which there was a cessation of hostilities for a few hours. This does not include the casualties between 4 p. m. ² when a flag of truce was hoisted, of which no notice was taken by the Nawab and 5 p. m., ³ when Fort William

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 29.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 50 and vol. III, p. 300.

3. "The Moors were wholly taken up in plundering till the *Subah* entered the Fort, which was a little after five in the afternoon."—Cooke, Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 301. Holwell says, "The *Suba* and his troops were in possession of the Fort before six in the evening."—Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 134.

was actually captured by assault ¹. It was during this interval that Lieutenant Blagg ‘defended the bastion he was upon, till he and all his men were cut to pieces.’² Also ‘the south-west bastion was carried by escalade, which made the party stationed there force open the back gate, to endeavour to save their lives by swimming or otherwise, but were most of them either drowned or cut to pieces’.³ Says Holwell in his letter to Council, Fort Saint George, dated the 3rd August 1756, “The guard there and a great part of the garrison, military and militia rushed out the moment the gate was opened and endeavoured to escape; many were killed, some escaped and others received quarter.”⁴ This bears out what the French Council, Chandernagore, wrote in their letter, dated the 16th December 1756, to the Superior Council in the Isle of France:—“The white flag was displayed on the afternoon of the 20th, i. e., after three days’ siege. But the Moors, before the capitulation was arranged, crowded to the gates and as no one fired on them, easily burst them in and entered, killing all who tried to resist.”⁵

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1. “By way of capitulation or conference he [Holwell] waved a flag of truce, which not being understood by the Moors, no regard was paid to it.”—Cooke, *Hill's Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 300.
 2. Lindsay, *Hill's Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 168.
 3. Tooke's Narrative, *Hill's Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 264.
 4. *Hill's Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 185.
 5. *Hill's Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 58.

We may note here that the Armenians and the Portuguese had become thoroughly demoralized since the 19th and were incapable, therefore, of offering any resistance. As Drake says, "At break of day, the 19th June.....though we beat incessantly to arms, scarce a man appeared of the Portuguese and Armenian militia or our soldiery [the bulk of whom consisted of the Portuguese and the Armenians], until the Governor, Messrs. Holwell and Baillie went through every part of the factory where many had hid themselves to encourage and bring them to their duty, to which they came but very faintly." Lindsay tells the same story in the following words:—"At day-break the whole garrison was in the utmost confusion, many of them in liquor, the Portuguese and the Armenians so dispirited that it was with the utmost difficulty any of them made their appearance."¹ It is clear therefore that both before and after the hoisting of the flag of truce by Holwell on the 20th June 1756, resistance was offered by the Europeans alone and it was they therefore who were shot down or cut to pieces when the Nawab's men stormed the fort. Holwell

1. Hill in his Introduction to *Bengal Records*, says, "On shore every effort had been made to bring the men to their duty, but the Armenians and Portuguese were too terrified to be of any use."—p. LXXXI.

does not say whether the twenty-five men who were killed before he hoisted a flag of truce were all Europeans but Captain Grant makes the point clear when he says that upwards of 50 Europeans were killed on the bastions.¹ As we have seen, there were only 77 Europeans in Fort William on the morning of the 20th June and out of them at least 51 were killed by the time the fort was captured. In addition to them, there was one Dutch Sergeant named Hedleburgh who forced open the back gate and deserted to the Nawab², before the fort was captured. The number of Europeans in Fort William was therefore reduced to 25.

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1. According to Forrest 50 Europeans were killed on the bastions. *The Life of Lord Clive*, vol. I, p. 320.
 2. "A body of the enemy scaled the north-west bastion, as did another party to the southward (where the wall was low) and drove our people from their stations there. As soon as this was known a Dutchman of the Artillery Company broke open the back-door of the Factory, and with many others attempted to make their escape that way."—Cooke, *Hill's Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 300. Holwell takes a different view of the conduct of the Dutch Sergeant and in his letter to Council, Fort Saint George, dated the 17th July 1756, says, "During the parley our back gate was betrayed to the enemy in concert—I judge—with some that had deserted the preceding night from the walls and those who had the guard of that gate, who were obliged to wrench off the locks and bolts, the keys being in my possession." In his letter to Council Fort Saint George, dated the 3rd August 1756, Holwell added, "The gate was forced by a Sergeant of the Train named Hedleburgh now in the Service of the Nabob." *Hill's Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 185.

M. Vernet in his letter to M. La Tour, dated the 7th July 1756 says:—"When the Fort was taken, a great carnage was wrought, but soon after put a stop to by the Prince."¹ No truer description could have been given, in so few words, of the events which attended the capture of Fort William and the latter portion of M. Vernet's statement is borne out by Captain Mills who says, "In the meanwhile the Moors surrounding us on all sides and showing signs of quarter to all the people in the water they went on shore and delivered themselves up to the Moors, some of them went to the Nabob and were by him pardoned, others in confusion got into a *Budgerow*, while the enemy was plundering and escaped down on board the ships at that time lying little below Surman's Garden."² Another incident is described by William Lindsay in the following words, "The gentlemen below drew out and were resolved to die rather than be taken when one of the Nabob's *Jemindars* advanced and told them they should not be hurt if they would lay down their arms, the soldiers immediately grounded theirs and the gentlemen were obliged to do the same."³ Holwell was then taken to the Nawab "with his hands

1. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 60.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 43.

3. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 168.

bound, and upon complaining of that usage the Nabob gave orders for loosing his hands, and assured him upon the faith of a soldier, that not a hair of our heads should be hurt.”¹ To crown all these acts of mercy, “the Armenians and Portuguese were at liberty and suffered to go to their own houses.”² As Forrest says in his *Life of Lord Clive*, “If we consider his surroundings and his education, it is highly probable that Surajah Dowla was prone to cruelty, the common vice of despots. If however we judge him by his conduct to the prisoners after the capture of Calcutta, no monarch appears less disposed to persecution nor less inclined to avenge himself.”³

Captain Mills in his Diary names 16 Europeans who escaped when the Fort was taken. Presumably they were the men who went to the Nawab and were by him pardoned. Says Mills⁴, “At the time the Fort was taken, there was escaped the two Doctor Noxes, Doctor Gray, Paul Richard Pearks Esq., Dr. Taylor, Dr. English, Captain Collins, Captain Lewis, James Andrews, George Gray Junior, George Alsop, Edward Savage, James Johnstone,

1. Cooke, Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 301.

2. Cooke, Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 301.

3. *Life of Lord Clive*, vol. I, p. 329.

4. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 44.

William Tedcomb, Thomas Henderson, Thomas Hirwood." We know however that Pearkes and Lewis ¹ had left the Fort on the 19th June, and they must therefore be excluded. Mrs. Massey in her letter to Mr. William Davis, dated the 30th January 1757, names one more European, Pollock (her brother) who was allowed to leave the fort on the evening of the 20th June. As she says, " But in the sackage of the town he was stripped to his shirt, and Providence got him out of the Fort with life that he was not shut up in the Black Hole after the taking of the Fort. Luckily got out with the Armenians." ² This supports what the French Council, Chandernagore, wrote to M. De La Bretesche on the 21st June, 1756 :—"Those of the English who could not escape on board the ships and who made no resistance have been plundered but their lives spared." ³

Out of the 25 Europeans who remained in the Fort when it was captured by the Nawab, 15 were allowed to go away and only ten remained. They were Holwell, Court, Burdet, Cooke and Lushington, five of the Company's servants, Walcot, a Military officer, Captain Mills, Dixon and Moran, three of the sea-officers who had

1. Cooke, Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 299.

2. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. II, p. 182.

3. Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 23.

joined the military and one other gentleman who was a friend of Captain Mills and remained with him in the house of Dr. Knox till the 1st July.¹ These gentlemen were detained because the Nawab was dissatisfied with what he found in the treasury and suspected that the treasure was concealed somewhere in the Fort. Says Holwell, "I had three interviews with him that evening, one in *Durbar*. At first he expressed much resentment at our presumption in defending the fort against his army with so few men, asked why I did not run away with my Governor and others, seemed much disappointed and dissatisfied at the sum found in the treasury, asked me many questions on this subject, to all which I made the best replies that occurred." Sirajuddaula left the fort between 6 and 7 p. m., after putting Manikchand in charge of it as Governor² and at night Holwell and his nine companions were confined in the Black Hole. On the 21st morning, they all came out alive and Holwell was again carried to the Nawab to whom he complained that he had been confined at night in the Black Hole. To quote Holwell, "He [Sirajuddaula] answered me by saying he was well informed there was an immense treasure

1. Presumably this gentleman was also a sea-officer who had joined the military.

2. Cooke, Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. III, p. 301.

buried or secreted in the fort, and that I was privy to it, and commanded me to point out where it was hid, if I expected favour (one of his *Jemmantlaars* had told me on the way the cause of my being sent for, and advised me to make a full discovery, or that I should be shot off from the mouth of a cannon, the next half-hour). I urged everything possible against the information he had received, or that if such a thing had been done, I was totally a stranger to it; but all I could say seemed to gain no credit with the *Suba*." Holwell, Court, Walcot and Burdet were then sent to Murshidabad as prisoners and the rest were set free that very day.

There is one other way of dealing with the question of numbers. There were only 170 men left in Fort William after the flight of Drake and out of them 4 were sent to bring *Prince George* and 57 deserted on the 19th night. The next day 51 Europeans were killed and one Dutch Sergeant namely Hedleburgh forced the western gate and deserted to the Nawab. 15 Europeans were pardoned by the Nawab and allowed to go away and 10 were confined in the Black Hole for the night. The total comes to 138 and we have now to account for 32 only. These were the Portuguese and the Armenians, some of whom escaped as soon

as the fort was stormed and the rest were taken prisoners but allowed by the Nawab to go away. We find therefore, that all the persons who were left in Fort William after the flight of Drake can be satisfactorily accounted for as having been killed in course of fighting or as having left the fort in safety. There can be no better evidence than this to prove conclusively that the Black Hole story is a myth and should no longer be allowed to tarnish the page of history.

CHAPTER IV.

HOLWELL'S RELIABILITY-

Holwell came to India in 1748 and was after some time appointed to be the Zamindar of Calcutta. Busted in his *Echoes from Old Calcutta*, writes, "He was a deep student of the religion and customs of the Hindoos and published a work on their Mythology, Cosmogony, Fasts and Festivities, many valuable and curious materials towards which in the shape of ancient manuscripts which he had collected were lost at the time of the capture of Calcutta. Like many another Englishman Holwell was not without honour save in his own country. It was left to an illustrious foreigner [Voltaire] to appreciate and eulogise what he had done for oriental literature".

Holwell himself says :—" It is well known that at the capture of Calcutta A. D. 1756, I lost many curious Gentoo manuscripts and among them two very correct and valuable copies of the Gentoo Shastah. They were procured by me with so much trouble and expense that even the Commissioners of Restitution though not at all disposed to favour me allowed me two thousand Madras

Rupees in recompense for the particular loss ; but the most irreparable damage I suffered under this head of grievances was a translation I made of a considerable part of the Shastah, which had cost me eighteen months' hard labour. I should in the compass of one year more with the close application I intended bestowing on it, have accomplished a complete translation of the whole Shastah; that would, I flattered myself, have been valuable acquisition to the learned world, had not the fatal catastrophe of fifty six put it totally out of my power even to attempt it again. From that change in our affairs abroad a new chain of pursuits engrossed my time and attention so that I could no longer devote myself to the studies I had before so much at heart. However during the last eight months of my residence in Bengal, being freed from the plagues of Government (thanks to my honourable masters for it) I resumed my researches with tolerable success; which joined to some manuscripts recovered by an unforeseen and extraordinary event (that possibly I may hereafter recite) enables me to undertake the task I now assign myself."

The above quotation will show amply that modesty was not one of the failings of Mr. Holwell. The plagues of Government coveted and

cherished as long as there was the slightest hope of getting or retaining them and the ironical thanks to the Honourable masters speak for themselves. But passing over this trait of Mr Holwell's character we shall confine ourselves for the present to his literary achievements.

On page 15 of his ' Historical Events ' he says :—

“Thus the original plain and pure and simple tenets of the Chartah Bhada of Bramah (fifteen hundred years after its first promulgation) became by degrees utterly lost; except to three or four Goseyn families, who at this day are only capable of reading and expounding it from the Sanscrit character; to these may be added a few others of the tribe Battezaaz Bramins, who can read and expound from the Chartah Bhade which still preserved the text of the original as before remarked.”

Mr. Holwell however tried to show off his knowledge of Sanskrit and retained in his translation a few words occurring in the original. These are as follows :—

P. 35.—Debtah Logue (angelic host—Logue = people)¹.

1. The meanings and derivations within the brackets are Holwell's.

P. 42.—Hazar par Hazar (Thousands upon thousands).

P. 44.—Onderah (Onder, dark ; Onderah, intense darkness).

P. 48.—Duneah-Houdah (Dooneah or Dunneah, the world; Dunneah-Houdah, the universe).

P. 51.—Mhard (mhard—the common name of man, from Murto, matter or earth).

P. 51.—Jhoale (Water-fluid)

P. 117.—Sixty *pulls* make one gurree.

Ek Paar dheen.

Dua paar dheen.

Teen Paar dheen.

Chaar paar dheen.

Rhaat.

Ek Paar rhaat.

P. 114.—Ekuttar (seventy one)

P. 123.—Poora (full).

P. 131.—Baap ka surraad (sacred to the father)

P. 136.—Dole (a drum)

These words show that the original if any was nothing but an ordinary book in the Hindustani language with a mixture of Bengali, both Bengali and Hindustani being in common use in Bengal where Mr. Holwell spent so many years of his life.

All the talk about Chartah Bhade being a lost Code of the Hindus in the ancient Sanskrit language which only a few notabilities including Mr. Holwell could understand was mere cant and nonsense invented primarily to support the fraudulent claim of several thousands of rupees for the alleged loss of the manuscripts. This single incident lays bare the character of Mr. Holwell who from his own admission was guilty at least of cheating by false pretences.

We now come to another event in the life of Mr. Holwell which fetched him the huge sum of over three hundred thousand rupees. This relates to the deposition of Mir Jafar and the setting up of Mir Kasim, as the Subadar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Mr. Holwell in order to make out a case against Mir Jafar, had to invent another tragedy similar to the Black Hole of Calcutta. The following is an extract from his Address to the Proprietors :—

“ A memorial setting forth causes of the late change in the Subaship.

“ Numberless are the instances of men of all degrees whose blood he has spilt without the least assigned reason, to learn the names and circumstances of all these sufferers would be a work of

time but some of the most striking examples are these following:—

“Coje Haddee, the first Buxey was first banished for pretended conspiracy against the Nabob’s life and afterwards cut off at Shahabad in his march out of the province; Mir Cazim, the second Buxey was invited by the Chota Nawab to his house and after having received from him unusual marks of affection assassinated at the gates of the palace, Yar Mohammad formerly in great favour with the Nawab Surraja Dowla and since Daroga of Emaraut slain in the presence of the Chota Nawab in the month of April 1760.

“Ghasita Begum, widow of the Nawab Shahamat jung; Amna Begum mother to the Nabob Surraja Dowla; Muradud Dowla, the son of Padsha Chauli Chan, adopted by Shahamat jung; Suffen Nisa Begum, widow of the Nawab Surraja Dowla. The five unhappy sufferers mentioned last perished all in one night at Dacca about the month of June 1760, where they had been detained prisoners since the accession of Jaffair Ali Khan to the Subaship. A *perwana* was sent to Jessaut Khan, the Nabob of Dacca to put to death all the survivors of the family of the Nabob Aliverdi Khan, Shehamat jung and Surraja Dowla, but upon his declining to obey so cruel an order,

the messenger who had private instruction to execute this tragedy in case of the other's refusal, took them from the place of their confinement and carried them out at midnight upon the river, massacred and drowned them with about seventy women of inferior note and attendants. What became of Aliverdi Khan's widow is uncertain, it being reported by many that she escaped the fate of the rest of the family."

The letter of Council, Fort William to the Court of Directors dated the 30th September 1766, takes away the sheep's clothing of Mr. Holwell and shows him in his true colour. It runs as follows:—

“In justice to the memory of the late Nawab Mir Jaffier we think it incumbent on us to acquaint you that the horrible massacres where-with he is charged by Mr. Holwell in his Address to the Proprietors of East India Stocks are cruel aspersions on the character of that prince which have not the least foundation in truth.”

In conclusion we find that desire to amass wealth at all costs and love of self-advertisement were the two salient features of Mr. Holwell's character and it was the latter which in an evil moment inspired him to concoct the Black Hole story. He did thereby grave injustice not only

to Sirajuddaula but also to his brave countrymen who died fighting sword in hand against heavy odds and even in face of certain death. Men like Blagg¹ deserve to be honoured in every country and every age not because they were trapped and killed like rats in a dingy hole but because they fought like lions and voluntarily preferred death with honour to a life which they thought to be devoid of honour. The monument which Holwell raised was a great profanation of the sacred memory of such heroes and must have caused not a little amount of uneasiness to their souls in the other world. It was, as a Persian poet would say, their curses and imprecations from there that moved Lord Hastings to pull down that monument of infamy which had been raised by a mean fame-hunter to bring to his own level heroes who had won their laurels in fire and in blood². Little did Holwell know that with his facile pen he 'could fool some of the people all the time and all of the people some of the time', but that it was not in his power 'to fool all the people all the time.'

1. According to Holwell and Captain Mills, Blagg died in the Black Hole.

2. At 4 p. m., on the 20th June Holwell hoisted a white flag in order to amuse the enemy—(Hill's *Bengal Records*, vol. I, p. 114). This however proved to be the ruin of the gallant defenders of Fort William. The Nawab's men stormed the fort and killed all who resisted. Mr. Holwell, of course, thought little of his personal safety and delivered his sword to the first *Jemmadar* whom he saw.

APPENDIX I.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CAPTAIN MILLS' DIARY AND ACCOUNT OF THE LOSS OF CALCUTTA BY GEORGE GREY, JUNIOR.

CAPTAIN MILLS. GEORGE GREY, JUNIOR.

Page 1. " June the
7th. We heard of Cassem-
bizars being delivered
up to the Nabob and
Mr. Watts with the
other gentlemen made
prisoners.

* * *

On the 15th the
French sent us word of
the Nabob's army's
march to Calcutta.

* * *

On the 17th, the
enemy attackt the re-
doubt at Perrins about
noon. At 3 in the after-
noon 40 men with 2 field
pieces were sent to rein-

On the 17th of June
the enemy attacked the
redoubt at Perrins
about noon, and at 3
o'clock in the afternoon
40 men with 2 field

force that place where in the engagement the Moors from behind the trees and bushes killed 2 of our men one of whome was Mr. Ralph Thoresby one of the Honourable Company's writers.

About 8 at night an 18-pounder gun was sent out to Perrins ; and the 2 field pieces with the reinforcement that had been sent were ordered back to their former stations.

In the night Lieutenant Pacard who had the command at Perrins, sallied out with his party on the enemy, and having drove them from their posts, spiked up four of their guns, and brought away some of their ammunition.

pieces were sent to the assistance of that place, where in the engagement the Moors from behind the trees and bushes killed 2 Europeans, one of whom was Ralph Thoresby.

About 8 o'clock an 18 pounder came out to Perrins, and the 2 field pieces with the reinforcement that had been sent in the afternoon went back to their former stations.

In the night, Lieutenant Pacard, who had the command at Perrins, sallied out upon the enemy, and having drove them from their guns spiked up 4 of them and brought away some ammunition.

Page 2. On the 18th of June about 9 in the morning our outworks were attacked by small partys in the skirts of the town, we dispatched several small partys to the tops of several of the highest houses near hand to annoy the enemy, and Monsieur Labonne with a party of militia and volunteers and two field pieces to guard the cross roads.

Amongst those small partys were killed Messrs. Charles Smith and Wilkinson. Monsieur Labonne, who retired to the Jail house with his party, bravely defended it for six hours, till himself and most of his party were wounded, were ordered

On the 18th about 9 o'clock in the morning our outworks were attacked. Small parties were dispatched to the tops of some of the highest houses, from thence to annoy the enemy on their approach.

Amongst those Messrs. Charles Smith and Robert Wilkinson had the misfortune to be killed. Monsieur La Bonne who with a small party was posted at the Jail, bravely defended it for six hours, till himself and most of his men being wounded, they

to retire within the trenches at the Court house after having spiked up their guns, and brought off all the wounded.

The enemy finding the firing to desist took possession of the post, but in the retreat many of the *buckerys* deserted us and went over to the enemy. This afternoon we sent most of the European ladies on board the ships and several of the gentlemen deserted with them particular the Cornel and Lieutenant Mr. Manningham and Frankland, with several others.

Page 3. In the evening the enemy attacked us smartly, killing and

In the evening the enemy killing and wounding several of our

wounding several of our men, and surrounding us on all sides, we were ordered to retreat from our outworks (after having spiked up our guns) and take possession of the Church, Mr. Cruttenden's, Eyres, and the Company's Houses, which we quietly kept all night.

wounding several of our men their small arms, they endeavoured to surround us. Were ordered to retreat from the outworks, after having spiked up our guns and take possession of the church, Mr. Cruttenden's, Aires's, and the Company's houses which we quietly kept all that night.

The morning of the 19th the enemy advanced to us, and attacked us vigorously on all sides, having got into Mr. Aires's compound and outhouses, several volleys of small arms were fired by those that kept that post and as readily returned, but they having made a hole through the east end of the church, and

The enemy, on the morning of the 19th advanced upon us, and still surrounding us killed and wounded some of our men; we were ordered to retire from the Church and houses we had taken possession of the night before and come within the fort. The ladies and wounded men were sent on board the ships.

fireing their cannon through at the same time, which killed two men, were ordered to retire from the outworks into the garrison, upon which Lieutenant Blagg set fire to Mr. Crutten-den's house and retired to the garrison. This morning sent the remainder of the European women with all the wounded on board the shiping.

Page 4. 19th. About	The Governour,
10 the Governour,	Messrs. Manningham,
Messrs. Maggott, one of	Frankland, Macket,
our Captains, the Com-	Commandant Minchin,
mandant Minchin,	Captain Alexander
Captain Grant, Messrs.	Grant, Messrs Crutten-
Cruttenden, Mapletoft,	den, Mapletoft, Som-
Sumner, Billers, Rider,	mer, Billers, O' Hara,
Tooke, Senior, Ellis,	Rider, Tooke, Senior,
Vossmer, Charlton,	Ellis, Vassmer, Orr,
Leycester, Dr. Fuller-	Leycester, Charlton
ton, Lieutenants Oharo,	with severals of the
Whitherburn, Messrs.	military and militia

Heugh Bailie, Edward fled on board the ships
 Ridge, attorney, Robert and went down the
 Bolderick, supercargo, river, which greatly
 Henry Summers, Elves, dispirited our men.
 Lange, Smith, Whaley,
 Lyng the fidler, What-
 more, Thomas Barnard,
 Abraham Jacobs, Fran-
 cis Child, Robert Carr
 Page 5. fledd on board
 the ships, and weighed
 their anchors, and
 dropt down the river
 takeing with them all
 the boats, sloops and
 vessels. Being cutt off
 from a retreat, and the
 principle officers desert-
 ing with so many along
 with them greatly dis-
 pirited the people in the
 garrison.

Upon which Mr. Immediately upon
 Holwell was at the the Governour's going
 Governor's absconding off Mr. Holwell was
 made General and unanimously chosen
 Governor of Calcutta, in his room (Mr. Pear-

Mr. Pearks who was senior in Council, giving it up to Mr. Holwell for the time being, Mr. Holwell expressing his hearty intentions to defend the Fort till the last extremity, and made a publick declaration upon the bastions of his detesting Mr. Drake's flight, at the same time encouraging the military to stand to their arms and hold out the siege with a promise of 3 chests of the Honourable Company's treasure, containing 24,000 rupees, amongst them if they would keep the place.

But for want of a sufficient number of officers, so many having left the place,

But upon so many of the principal officers leaving us, the souldiers could not be hindered

Page 6. the Dutch soldiers could not be hindered from breaking into the rooms of the officers that had absconded, the military and gunroom mostly consisting of that country, and taking from thence what wine and spirits they could lay their hands on, by which means they began to be mutinous and unruly. In the night a corporal and 56 men, most of them Dutch, deserted us and went over the walls to the enemy.

In the night a corporeal and several private men, most of them Dutch, deserted us by dropping over the walls and going to the enemy.

We remained firing as opportunity required; in the meanwhile the enemy continued plundering the town, and burning the houses in sundry places.

Next morning on the 20th the enemy gott possession of the top of the church and houses round about the garrison which being loftier than the walls, and commanding all the bastions and galled us so that no man could stand them (for their small arms) they killing or wounding all that appeared in sight, amongst whome was Lientenant Smith, Captain Pickering,

Page 7. and wound- ing most of our officers, Ajudent Talbot who after dyed of his wound etc.

The surviving officers were obliged to exert themselves pistol in hand to keep the soldiers to their

Next morning the enemy having got possession of the top the Church and houses round the fort, from thence galled our men with their small arms, killing several of them (among whom was Captain Smith) and wounding many of our officers. The Church commanded our walls in such a manner that the men could not stand to their guns, and the officers were obliged to go about and present cocked pistols at the souldiers to make them mount the walls which were almost deserted; but they, whenever they were out of sight, skulked and would not go up. About noon the Governour and Council thought it proper to

quarters. At noon the Govournor and Company thought it proper to write to the Nabob and *duan* demanding a truce, but he disdainfully threw it away and would not give us an answer.

The Honourable Company's ship *Prince George* which had hitherto layn before Perrin's Gardens was ordered down abreast of the fort, but in the way unfortunately by the bad conduct of the pilot Francis Morris, a Dutchman, ran ashore and some time after was taken by the enemy, the Captain and his officers who gott up to Chincera after seeing the fort taken was by the Dutch delivered up

write to the Nabob and *duan*, demanding a truce and accomodation, but had no answer returned.

The ship *Prince George* which had hitherto layn before Perrins (from whence our forces had been sometime withdrawn) was ordered down abreast of the fort, but in the way unluckily ran ashore by the misconduct of the pilot Francis Morris and was taken by the Moors.

to the Moors in three hours after their arrival.

About 4 of clock in the afternoon the enemy called out to us not to fireing.

Page 8. in consequence to which the Govournor shewed a flagg of truce, and gave orders for the garrison not to fire. Upon which the enemy in vast numbers came under our walls, and at once began to sett fire to the windows and gates of the fort which were stopt up with bales of cotton and cloath, and began to break open the fort gate, scaleing our walls on all sides.

This put us in the utmost confution, some opening the back gate

About 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the enemy called out to us not to fire, in consequence of which the Governour showed a flag of truce, and gave orders for us not to fire, upon which the enemy in vast numbers came under our walls, and at once set fire to the windows which were stopt up with cotton bales, began to break open the Fort Gate, and scaled our walls on all sides.

This put us in the utmost confusion. Some rushed out at the gate

and running into the river, others to take possession of a boat that lay ashore half afloat and half dry was so full in an instant that she could not be gott off. In the meanwhile the Moors surrounding us on all sides, and shewing signs of quarters to all the people in the water, they went on shore and delivered themselves up to the Moors, some of them went to the Nabob and where by him pardoned, others in the confution gott into a *budgerow*, while the enemy.

Page 9. was plundering, and escaped down on board the ships at that time lying little below SurmonsGardens.

But most of those

towards the river to take possession of a boat that lay half in and half out of the water, and in an instant it was so laden that it was impossible to get it off. In the meantime the Moors surrounded and shewed them signs of quarter, upon which they delivered themselves up. Some of them went to the Nabob himself and were by him pardoned, and others whilst the enemy were busy about the plunder got into a boat and went down the river to the ships at that time lying off Surmon's Gardens.

But most of those that remained in the fort were put into the Black Hole to the number of 146, of whom 123 were miserably suffocat.

that remained in the Fort where put into the Black Hole, to the number of 144 men women, and children. ed by the heat, occasioned by so many being shut up in so small a place.

Off whome upwards of 120 where miserably smothered by the heat occasioned by so many being shut up in so small a place, as to be obliged to stand upon one another.

Amongst those that unhappily suffered were Messrs. Eyres, Bailie Senior, Coales, Dumbleton, Jewkes, Revely, Law, Jebb, Carse, Vallicourt, Bellimy Senior and Junior (Thomas shott himself on the wall), Drake, Byng, Dalrymple, Patrick Johnstone, Street, Stephen and Edward

Among those that unhappily suffered, were Messrs. Eyres, Baillie, Coales, Dumbleton, Jenks, Revely, Law, Jebb, Carse, Valicourt, Bellamy Senior, Drake, Byng, Dalrymple, P. Johnston, Street, Stephen and Edward Page, Grub, Dod, Torriano, Knapton, Ballard, Captains

Pages's, Grubb, Dodd,	Clayton, Witherington,
Torrians, Knapton,	Buchanan, Lieutenants
Ballard, Captain Clay-	Hays, Simpson,
ton, Buchanan, Whither-	Blagg,, Bishop, Pacard,
ington, Lieutenants	Bellamy, Ensigns Scott
Simson, Hays, Blagg,	and Wedderburn.
Bishop, Paccard, Ensign	
Scott, Wedderborn,	
James Guy, carpenter,	
Captain Hunt.	

Page 10. Robert
Carey, Thomas Leach,
the 2 Stopfords, Porter,
Hylierd, Cocker, Carce.

Page 11. Amongst
those that had escaped
death in the Black Hole
and came out alive were
John Holwell, Esqr.,
Governour, Court, Bur-
dett, Walcott Ensign,
who were taken away
by the Nabob's party
and put into irons both
legs. Messrs. Cook,
Lushington gott down
on board the ships, the

Among those that
had been in the Black
Hole, but came out
alive, were Messrs,
Holwell, Court, Burdett,
and Ensign Walcott who
were sent up to Muxida-
vad in irons, and Messrs
Cooke and Lushington
who got down to the
ships.

rest remaining is Mr. Mills, Mr. Dixon, Patrick Moran, Thomas Meadows, John Angell, John Burgaft, John Arnd, John Jones, Philip Cosall, Peter Thomas, John Gatliff, John Boirs, Barnard Clelling, Richard Aillery, all that escaped the terrible dungeon.

Page 12. At the time the Fort was taken, there was escaped the two Doctors Noxes, Doctor Gray, Paul Richard Pearks Esqr., Dr. Taylor, Dr. English, Captain Collins, Captain Lewis, James Andrews, George Grey Junior, George Alsop, Edward Savage, James Johnstone, William Tedcomb, Thomas Henderson, Thomas Hirwood.

Page 13. Having no men on the bastions, but two or three centinels, the greatest part of the soldiers for want of provisions and having plenty of drink could not be prevailed on to mount the bastions any more.

Those that were otherwise, were excessively fatigued, having been on duty ever since the first of the siege.

The garrison being so reduced for want of relief, was most untimely overcome with plenty of ammunition at hand.

Page 14. An account of the powder at the Fort with other ammunition:

Europe	barrels	37.
Do.	$\frac{1}{3}$ do	13.

At the time the fort was taken there was not above the number of 20 men upon the walls. The greatest part of the souldiers were drunk, and those that were sober were quite fatigued with continual hard duty, and want of a regular distribution of provisions.

Bombay	do	187.
Bengal	do	159.
		<hr/>
		396

Powder of Cap-
tain Withering-
tons.

Bengall	...	45.
Do. Barrels	...	50.
		<hr/>
		95.

Do. of the *Suc-*
cess Gallies.

Barrels	...	5.
Do. Carr	..	9.
		<hr/>
		14.

747 Maund 30 seer.

This is except the powder belonging to the vessels and merchants.

Page 15. An account of the iron round shott large and small 40760.

Do. of ready shells large and small.

	Ins.	
Do. of ready filled.	$\left\{ \begin{array}{ll} 10\frac{1}{2} & 50 \\ 4\frac{1}{2} & 36 \\ 3\frac{1}{2} & 300 \end{array} \right.$	
Hand Grenades	500	
	<hr/>	
	886	
Large empty shells.	$13\frac{1}{2}$	150
	$10\frac{1}{2}$	150
	8	50
	<hr/>	
	350	
Small shells empty	6200	
Grape shott.		
18 lb.	...	50
12	...	28
9	...	250
6	...	600
4	...	150
3	...	300
2	...	250
1	...	80
	<hr/>	
	2293	

1st of July was ordered
out of Calcutta.

Sudberry a remarkable fine place for ye
Summer season, 18 miles
from London.

Alleverdecon, the
father of Sarga Dowla
Con, who took Calcutta;
after we retook the
place, we putt up Myer
Jaffer Con and the next
year deposed him and
made his son-in-law
Cossam Ally Con.

APPENDIX II.

A LIST OF INHABITANTS AND OTHERS WHO BORE ARMS AT THE LAST SIEGE OF CALCUTTA. JUNE 1756.

Orme Mss. India IV pages 951—955.

Company's servants.

Drake

Manningham

Pearkes

Frankland

Macket

Holwell

Eyre

Baillie

Bellamy

Sumner

Court

Cooke

Coales

Valicourt

Jenks

Revely

Law

Billers

Ellis

Tooke
Rider
Jeb
Carse
Lindsay
Senior
Vasmer
Drake
Smith
Thoresby
Dalrymple
Orr
Wilkinson
Byng
Leycester
Page Stephen
Page Edward
Johnson
Harwood
Grub
Street
Gosling
Ballard
Lushington
Dodd
Toriano
Knapton
Charlton

Bardet

Grey

Military officers.

Minchin-commandant.

Clayton

Buchanan

Grant

Smith

Witherington

Captains.

Blagg

Hays

Simpson

Pickard

Talbot

Bishop

Lieutenants.

Bellamy

Scott

Walcot

Hastings

Wedderburn

Carstairs

Ensigns.

O' Hara-Engineer.

Clergy.

Bellamy.

Mapletoft.

Gray

Fullerton

Taylor

Knox Senior

Inglis

Company's Doctors.

Knox Junior

Fletcher

Lawyers.

Dumbleton

Putham

Ridge

Atkinson

Berdal

Cocker

Mackpherson

Porter

Hillier

Free Merchants.

Beaumont

Margas

Holmes

Douglas

Wood

Cruttenden

Blackford

Nixon

Stevenson

Cole

Inhabitants

Baldrick

Parker

Pyefinch

Wilson	}	<i>Taylors</i>
Rannie		
Phillips		

Whaley	}	<i>Butchers</i>
Burton		
Alsop		
Stopford		

Guy	}	<i>Carpenters</i>
Surman		
Cole		
Todd		
Stopford		
Blue		

Leech	}	<i>Smiths</i>
Burton		

Tilley	}	<i>Court Sergeants</i>
Cart wright		
Bruce		

Coverly—Taylor

Osborne—*Sail-maker*

Blancy	}	<i>Joiners</i>
Barnet		

Foreigners

Mackpherson Daniel

Carvalho

Albert

La Beaum

Montague

Montro

Montrong

Freze

Piniot

Coquelin

Beanto

Caytano

Joam

Bodle

Fiddlers

Ling

Tuball

Hilmbrat

Janniko

Heneriko

John

Sea-Captain and Officers

Rannie

Walmsley

Wedderburn

Purnel

Widdrington

Nickleson

Young

Watmore

Sanders

Campbell

Dixon

Mills

Carey

Lewis

Baldwin

Austin

Best

Baillie

Laing

Savage

Johnson

Smith

Costilly

Cozens.

Lord

Hunt

Graham

Aston

Summers.

Iver

Caley

Elvis

Champion

Collins

Brown

Hague

Downey

Whiteridge

Pickering

Morain		
Mc Kensie		
Dundas		
Lemmon		
Dean		
Parsons		
Tool		
Mc Laughlin		
Tart		
Pennatz		
Morris		
European soldiers as per muster-Roll		35
Ditto Artillery	25
Topazes	190
Portugueze and Armenian Militia		50
Johnson Farrier		
Moulder Coachman		
Simms Footman		
Total number of Europeans	236
Total number of Portugueze and Ar-		240
menians		
Total number of Armed men	476
Sick and invalid	18
Armed Europeans on shore	213
Armed Europeans on board the ships		23
Company's servants	50
Military Officers	19

Free merchants and others	...	102
Sea-faring men	...	50
European soldiers	...	35
Ditto Artillery	...	25
Topaz soldiers	...	190
Portuguese and Armenian Militia	...	50
Volunteers	...	45
Uncovenanted servants	...	25
Killed or otherwise lost	...	71

